



POVERTY SOLUTIONS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



PROGRESS REPORT

ON THE COVER: Poverty Solutions partnered with the Ginsberg Center, U-M Human Resources, and the Youth Policy Lab to offer job opportunities at U-M, doubling participation in Washtenaw County's Summer17 Youth Employment Program. **LEARN MORE ON PAGE 15.**

YEAR ONE – 2017



PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES, CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

FINDING NEW WAYS TO **PREVENT** AND **ALLEVIATE** **POVERTY**

IN MICHIGAN, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD

In its first year, **Poverty Solutions** at the University of Michigan has built a strong foundation to drive change by focusing on collaborative, action-based research partnerships with communities and policy-makers. We've also kickstarted a number of projects that address poverty in concrete, tangible ways based on insights from multiple disciplines.

Looking ahead, we aim to build on this momentum to test and share strategies that will tackle poverty in a meaningful and lasting way across our state and the nation, while offering even more opportunities for Michigan students to work with and learn from real-world practitioners.

INSIDE THIS REPORT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT	2
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR	3
HISTORY	4
FACULTY EXPERTS	6
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	9
PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS	14
DETROIT PARTNERSHIP	20
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	22
NEXT STEPS	28
OUR TEAM	29



Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan has completed an incredible inaugural year.

Our faculty and students are rising to the challenge of a major societal problem with impressive levels of collaboration that reflect much of U-M's outstanding breadth. We are proud to support this important work, as U-M scholars from multiple disciplines are connecting with one another and partnering with communities in our state.

Poverty Solutions exemplifies the values that attract students, faculty, and staff to the University of Michigan. These are bedrock principles that we hold deeply within our Michigan DNA, and our hearts: that we serve the public, that no challenge is too big or too complex, and that great universities aim to solve great problems.

Our hope is that we can lift millions of people out of poverty.

Poverty Solutions is providing new scientific evidence that will enhance living standards and improve economic mobility for people in communities. Dozens of community organizations are collaborating with U-M students and faculty members on projects related to economic mobility, workforce development, and public health.

We are planning a new partnership with the City of Detroit that will test innovative approaches to increasing economic mobility at scale, providing tangible benefits to Detroiters and serving as a model for other cities (pg. 20). This effort is already fostering the work of top researchers and leading U-M centers and institutes, such as the Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation and the Population Studies Center at the Institute for Social Research.

This report highlights some of our initial accomplishments, including a new program to provide youth from Washtenaw County with summer jobs and training on campus, in partnership with Washtenaw County government, and an effort in the Cody Rouge neighborhood in Detroit to test innovative ways to deliver health care services to those most in need.

Poverty Solutions carries forward our proud tradition of engagement, research, and teaching on poverty that dates back to the 1960s, as you can see in the historical timeline in this report. We are proud that this initiative will lead to even greater impact as U-M embarks on its third century.

I thank Director Luke Shaefer, the Poverty Solutions team, and all of our faculty members, students, staff and community partners who have worked to make the initiative a tremendous success.

It is more important than ever that leading public research universities like U-M focus our work in ways that can help society. We have the academic strength and talented students in all of our schools and colleges to change national, state, and local policy; work hand in hand with community organizations; and engage with the media to reshape discussions about how we can address such a complex problem.

Sincerely,
Mark Schlissel
President, University of Michigan



Since the launch of Poverty Solutions more than a year ago, the University of Michigan has come together to build upon a strong foundation that is driving change not just in our community, but across the nation.

The challenges presented by poverty cannot be tackled without drawing from insights across diverse areas of expertise. Indeed, we know the importance of multidisciplinary approaches to work like ours. For us, that means Poverty Solutions is not a stand-alone center or institute, but rather an initiative that brings together and connects the immense expertise and resources of U-M to make an impact on one of our most pressing social problems.

We do this by focusing on collaborative, action-based research partnerships with communities and policy-makers, and by leveraging existing university expertise, experience, and support from across U-M's 19 schools and colleges.

A touchstone of our work has been collaboration. When Poverty Solutions launched its first grant program,

we turned for help to the deep expertise of the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center, which brought nearly 25 years of experience in community-based participatory research.

The Edward Ginsberg Center helped build partnerships with Washtenaw County and Michigan Works! Southeast to guide our first-ever Summer Youth Employment Program (pg. 15). This program helps put Washtenaw County youth on a path to success while informing best practices for summer employment programs nationwide. We hope to significantly expand it this year.

These and the other projects featured in this report are addressing poverty in concrete, tangible ways based on insights from multiple disciplines. And the work doesn't end with the research findings.

Poverty Solutions is helping to apply these findings in real-world, scalable ways — by connecting directly with policymakers and organizations of practice (see School of Education on pg. 11).

We're also embarking on an exciting signature initiative in partnership with the City of Detroit (pg. 20).

The investment that U-M has made in Poverty Solutions is attracting additional resources to this important work. This past year, Poverty Solutions was instrumental in raising an additional \$1.35 million in funding from external partners to further projects on poverty alleviation conducted by investigators in five units across campus.

Looking ahead, we hope to build on this momentum and push the boundaries of action-based research to test and share strategies that will tackle poverty in meaningful and lasting ways, with strong and broad partnerships across our state and the nation, while offering even more opportunities for Michigan students to work with and learn from real-world practitioners.

I invite you to learn more about our efforts in the pages that follow, and I appreciate your interest and engagement as we bring together the U-M community and our partners in a united mission to find new ways to prevent and alleviate poverty in Michigan, the nation, and the world.

Sincerely,
H. Luke Shaefer
Director, Poverty Solutions

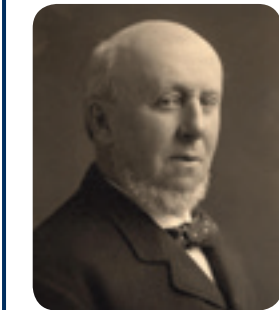
HISTORY

To know where we’re going, we have to know where we’ve been. The University of Michigan has invested in poverty research and teaching dating back to the 1960s.

Here are just a few milestones:

1879

U-M PRESIDENT JAMES ANGELL: “WE NEED TO MAKE HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE TO THE POOR”
“Poverty shall not keep a gifted youth from the opportunity for a liberal education.”



1964

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON’S REMARKS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson was seeking ideas for a radical domestic program to inspire American voters.

At U-M’s Spring Commencement that year, he outlined a loose plan to declare “war” on poverty and create a “Great Society.”

Read more: myumi.ch/aGVvo



1968

PANEL STUDY OF INCOME DYNAMICS

In 1966 and 1967, the government identified 30,000 American households for interviews in an effort to track whether its programs actually worked.

Government researchers approached Jim Morgan with the Institute for Social Research to do the research. This eventually led to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics at the university, the longest-running and most complete portrait of the economics of the American family.

Read more: myumi.ch/aAVv1



1968

10-POINT PROGRAM TO ABOLISH POVERTY

As U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Wilbur J. Cohen was instrumental in developing the New Deal and Great Society programs. In December 1968, he wrote “A Ten-Point Program to Abolish Poverty” that future leaders used as a blueprint for later legislation.

Cohen later served as a professor of social work and dean of the School of Education at U-M.

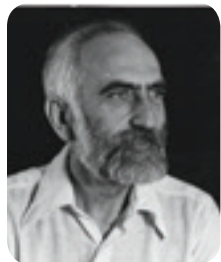
Read more: myumi.ch/aZb2d



1971

PERSPECTIVES ON POVERTY

A pioneer in interdisciplinary study, Max Heirich taught one of U-M’s first courses specifically focused on poverty. This course used a variety of methods to explore the phenomenon of poverty in an affluent society.



1989–2015



RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRAM ON POVERTY AND PUBLIC POLICY

U-M professor Sheldon H. Danziger launches the Research and Training Program in Poverty and Public Policy. The program provided mentorship and support for over 50 postdoctoral fellows and doctoral students on the causes and consequences of urban poverty.

1995–2002

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER ON POVERTY, RISK, AND MENTAL HEALTH

This U-M Center, funded by the NIMH, expanded knowledge for research and practice on the relationship between poverty and mental health.

1997

WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT STUDY

This U-M study combined the insights of poverty researchers, epidemiologists, and social workers, analyzing the ways in which a broad range of issues (labor market, mental health, physical health, and family problems) affect a welfare recipient’s ability to obtain and retain employment overtime.

2002–2016



NATIONAL POVERTY CENTER

The National Poverty Center (NPC) at U-M’s Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy was established as a university-based, nonpartisan research center. NPC conducted and promoted multidisciplinary, policy-relevant research, mentored and trained emerging scholars, and informed public discourse on the causes and consequences of poverty.

2016

POVERTY SOLUTIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

President Mark Schlissel launches Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, a universitywide effort to explore and test models to ease the effects of poverty and broadly share that knowledge, while working with community groups and supporting active-learning options for students.

H. Luke Shaefer, associate professor at the U-M School of Social Work and Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, is appointed the inaugural director of Poverty Solutions.



Sheldon Danziger, currently the President of the Russell Sage Foundation, led the National Poverty Center as the Henry J. Meyer Distinguished University Professor of Public Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.



Rebecca Blank, currently chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, was dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and served as co-director of the National Poverty Center. From 1997 to 1999, Blank was also one of three members of President Bill Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisers.

FACULTY EXPERTS

When President Schlissel announced Poverty Solutions in October 2016, faculty from across U-M's three campuses rose to the occasion to come together and make an impact. With a robust bank of nearly 100 faculty affiliate experts, Poverty Solutions leverages university support and resources to provide opportunities for funding, workshops and events, media outreach, and policymaker engagement.

Since its launch last year, U-M faculty experts have delivered testimony to policymakers at the national and local levels and were featured more than 50 times in media outlets ranging from The New York Times, The Washington Post, Michigan Radio, Vox, and the Huffington Post.

Here are just a few of our faculty experts. You can see more at poverty.umich.edu/experts.

NEARLY 100

U-M FACULTY EXPERTS



TRINA SHANKS

School of Social Work

Associate Professor of Social Work, School of Social Work, and Faculty Associate, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research

"Right now, so many children are living and learning in conditions that diminish their potential as early as two years old. If we...help families build just the most basic of assets, it can benefit the country over a longer period of time."

Trina Shanks' research interests include the impact of poverty and wealth on child well-being, asset-building policy and practice across the life cycle, and community and economic development. She is a co-investigator for the Saving for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment Impact Assessment study, which tests the impact of offering Head Start families college savings plans for their children. As a faculty member with the Technical Assistance Center, Shanks is actively engaged in six Detroit communities as part of the Good Neighborhoods program. She is also an evaluator for Detroit's summer youth employment program. She has served on the State of Michigan's Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity and is a national network co-lead for the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare's Grand Challenge for Social Work concerning reducing extreme economic inequality.



HARLEY ETIENNE

Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Assistant Professor of Urban and Regional Planning

"You can only enter a community for the first time once."

A long-time community collaborator, assistant professor Harley Etienne's research focuses on the intersection of social institutions and urban neighborhood change. He's particularly interested in the role that colleges and universities play in contributing to neighborhood-level change and regional economic development, and has been deeply involved in this work from Detroit to Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Haiti. In 2012, he released "Pushing Back the Gates: Neighborhood Perspectives on University-Driven Change in West Philadelphia," published by Temple University Press.

When it comes to community engagement, Etienne notes that strong partnerships form the foundation of impactful public scholarship, and stresses that a commitment of time, self, humility, and passion is required to do engaged scholarship well.



NATASHA PILKAUSKAS

Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Assistant Professor of Public Policy

"Housing instability is more common among the poor."

With this in mind, Natasha Pilkauskas recently examined whether the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) — a key U.S. social welfare policy and one of the largest cash transfer programs in the U.S. — reduces housing instability. Inability to pay rent, frequent moves, moving in with others or doubling up, eviction, and homelessness are all common among low-income households. As rents have risen and wages have not kept pace, housing affordability has declined over the last 15 years, increasing rates of housing instability.

This is the first time quantitative research has examined this link. Findings suggest expansions to the EITC might be a way to reduce housing instability and improve the lives of low-income families.



TAWANNA DILLAHUNT

School of Information

Assistant Professor

As more employers turn to sites like LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, and Snagajob to recruit talent, job seekers from low-income areas or who have limited education often are left out, which Tawanna Dillahunt hopes to change. One project aims to create a computer-based tool that would match underserved job seekers — such as those who may live in low-socioeconomic regions, have low income, or have limited education — to tasks that could increase their employability. Through collaboration with local Southeast Michigan organizations that specialize in job training, Dillahunt and her colleague Walter S. Lasecki are identifying real-world tasks and skills that job-seekers need for long-term employment.

Dillahunt hopes her research "will ultimately lead to more equitable digital employment and recruitment software."



JERRY DAVIS

Ross School of Business

Gilbert and Ruth Whitaker Professor of Business Administration
Associate Dean of Business and Impact
Professor of Management and Organizations

"Rather than seeing corporations as inherently evil or a good thing, corporations are like diesel trucks. They're a tool for getting stuff done. If the stuff you're doing is rescuing people from refugee camps, that's a good truck. And if it's running down children, then that's a bad truck. But like the truck itself ... corporations are a means and not an end. They are a tool. We don't want to attribute any intrinsic morality or immorality to them."

Using this approach, Jerry Davis's poverty-related research is broadly concerned with corporate governance, finance, new forms of organizations, and how they influence and affect society. His writings examine how ideas about corporate social responsibility have evolved to meet changes in the structures and geographic footprint of multinational corporations and whether "shareholder capitalism" is still a viable model for economic development. In his latest book, "The Vanishing American Corporation: Navigating the Hazards of a New Economy," he explains, "One of the side effects of having giant companies had been that it was a way for people to move up the hierarchy. That is disappearing."


ROSHANAK MEHDIPANA

School of Public Health
Assistant Professor of Health Behavior & Health Education

"It's not where you live that matters, it's why."

Through interdisciplinary approaches, assistant professor Roshanak Mehdipana reflects on historical and political contexts when studying the effects of various social and physical environmental factors on health. Her current research uses community-based participatory research principles to work with different community partners in better understanding barriers and facilitators to attaining adequate and affordable housing.

When looking at present-day conditions, her research reflects on historical policies that continue to have a discriminatory effect on communities across the U.S.


ELISABETH GERBER

Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
Jack L. Walker, Jr. Professor of Public Policy
Associate Dean for Research and Policy Engagement
Research Associate, Center for Political Studies

"Helping people gain empathy, a better sense of why and how reasonable people can disagree yet still get along and still solve problems together, I think it's a really important set of skills that everybody should be learning."

Elisabeth Gerber's poverty-related research focuses on urban, regional, and metropolitan policy especially in the areas of: transportation and water policy; climate adaptation; community workforce, and economic development. Gerber and her partners spearhead the Detroit Metropolitan Area Communities Study, an innovative place-based, online survey tool in Detroit. She currently serves as vice chair of the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan. She has recently developed a new tool for classroom learning called PolicyMaker, a software platform that allows students to engage in simulations around policy issues. Gerber says, "It's a great way both to teach students about how the rules work, how the process works, but also to get them to empathize with all of the different people and organizations and interests that are involved in making public policy decisions."

"When it comes to community engagement... a commitment of time, self, humility, and passion is required to do engaged scholarship well."

Assistant Professor
Harley Etienne

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EMBODIES THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S MISSION
TO SERVE SOCIETY.

**PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT**

ENGAGING FOR IMPACT

Public engagement embodies the University of Michigan’s mission to serve society. Poverty Solutions fulfills this mission by supporting and positioning university experts as central to solving challenges around poverty.

By providing resources for faculty to engage in a broad scope of public-facing activities — such as community outreach, policy and advocacy, and media interactions — we support and amplify expertise across U-M to help shape the policies and programs that can bring about positive change.

Since its inception, Poverty Solutions has brought together faculty experts from across disciplines through several events with community organizations, leaders, and policymakers — from major policy conferences in Washington, D.C. to engagement events in Lansing, Detroit, and Ann Arbor on topics such as economic mobility, affordable housing, early childhood inequality, and universal child allowance (see page 23).



“Engagement is a guiding principle of what we do here. Our research is connected to the real world. Whether we are in Washtenaw County, Detroit, Lansing, or Washington, D.C., we are bringing our research to policymakers and communities.”

H. Luke Shaefer,
Poverty Solutions director



We support and amplify expertise across U-M to help shape the policies and programs that can bring about positive change.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

“Cradle to Kindergarten: A New Plan to Combat Inequality”

As every parent knows, preschool often comes with a steep price tag. In Michigan and most other states, child care is often unaffordable for typical families, and studies show that only 26 percent of Michigan families can afford infant care.

By age 3, the inequality is clear: Most higher-income kids in the U.S. attend preschool, while most poor kids do not, according to U-M assistant professor at

the School of Education Christina Weiland and her co-authors in their new book, “Cradle to Kindergarten: A New Plan to Combat Inequality.”

The School of Education teamed up with Poverty Solutions for events in Michigan and Washington, D.C. where Weiland and her co-authors presented concrete plans to education organization leaders and policymakers.

Their recommendations are drawing interest at the local, state, and national level, which may mean a future with fewer kids left behind.

PRAISE FOR THE WORK:



U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan (NH)

“To our authors, thank you for bringing ‘Cradle to Kindergarten’ to us. And for your work outlining the challenges that families face, and the strategies that we can all take to ensure all children have access to quality, early childhood education.”



this great work. I will use it and I will quote from it.”
U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro (CT)

“What is being produced in our academic communities — the research, the science, the data — is the underpinning which we as elected officials and policymakers can use to really stand up and fight for these issues. Thank you for

“The policy recommendations in ‘Cradle to Kindergarten’ get at the core of addressing issues of inequity where they start — early childhood experiences and opportunities. Building strong families and supporting our youngest citizens is not only a worthwhile public investment, but it is essential if we are to thrive as a state and nation. Making progress on any one of the policy recommendations will have a positive impact, but implementing all four of them would take us to a place where we truly increase the odds for all children to succeed in school and in life.”

Washtenaw Intermediate School District Superintendent Scott Menzel



U-M Assistant Professor Christina Weiland discusses *Cradle to Kindergarten* at a Poverty Solutions and School of Education event.

ENGAGEMENT SERIES ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Making Housing More Affordable

Faculty, students, and staff from across U-M’s campuses joined local policymakers and the community to discuss approaches to make housing more affordable.

Arthur Jemison, director of housing and revitalization for the City of Detroit, kicked off the event, followed by sessions led by faculty paired with community experts. Rather than just listening to the challenges in those sessions, attendees joined in and tackled affordable housing issues, including homelessness in Washtenaw County, property tax exemption, and supportive services for low-income housing residents.

Connections made at the event led to a partnership between Quicken Loans, the City of Detroit, and the United Community Housing Coalition to help 80 Detroit renters facing displacement become homeowners through a right of first refusal process.

Watch a video summary of the event at: myumi.ch/aXbPP

GERALD R. FORD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Fighting Child Poverty with a Universal Child Allowance

About 15 million children in the United States live in families with incomes below the poverty line. The child poverty rate in the U.S. is among the highest of the developed nations. Experts argue that one reason is the lack of a child allowance, which many other countries already have.

For the past year, Poverty Solutions Director H. Luke Shaefer and his colleagues have been exploring research-based evidence to encourage the expansion of the current social safety net program for kids, the Child Tax Credit.

Their plan would reduce child poverty by 40 percent, cut deep poverty in half, and effectively eliminate the experience of families living on cash incomes below \$2 per person per day, as written about in Shaefer’s book, “\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America.”

Shaefer and his colleagues have connected with national policymakers to discuss this strategy, which has drawn interest across the political spectrum. As a result, new bills have been introduced in Congress that are in part shaped by their research.

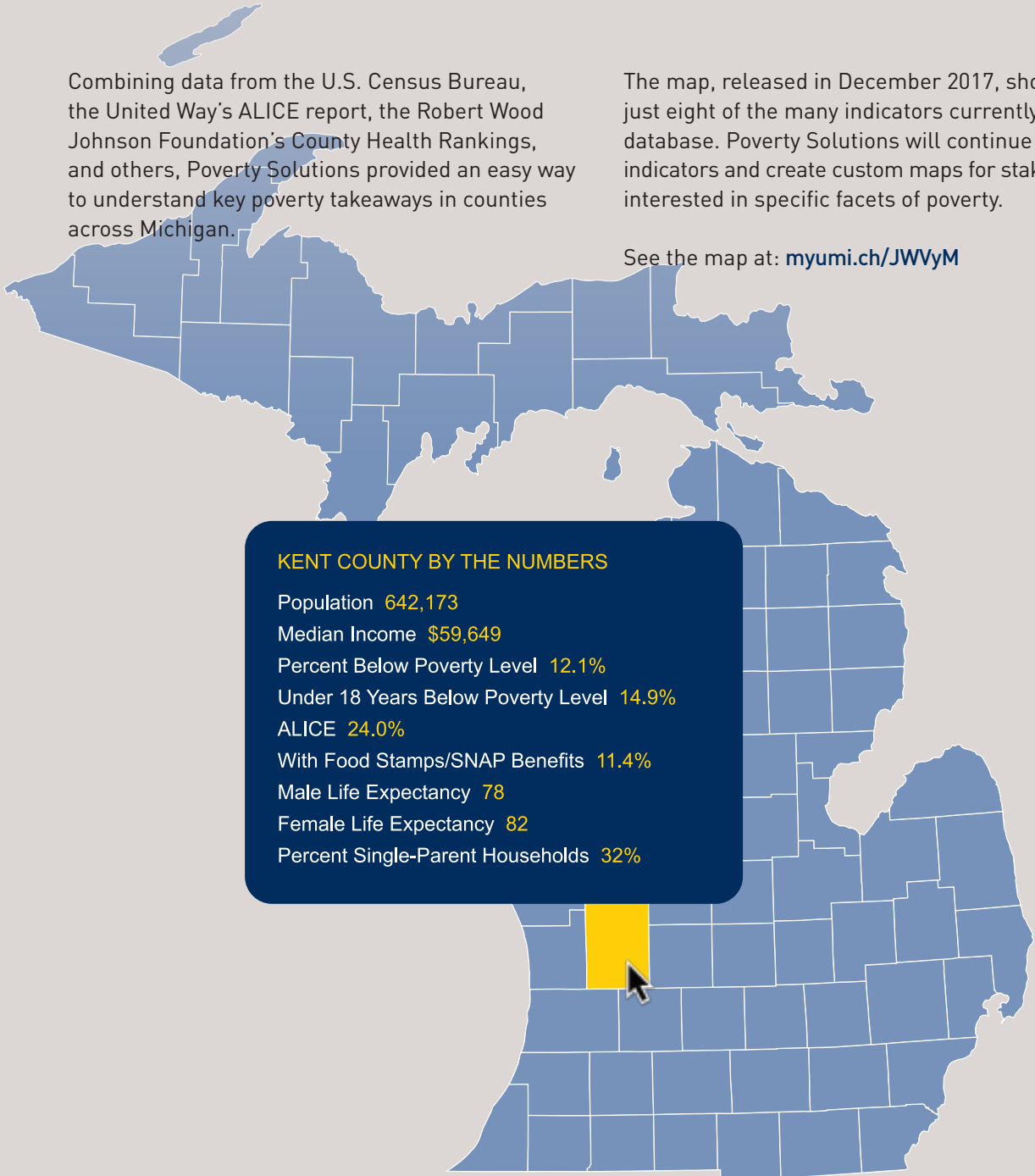
- Their engagement includes:
- A research paper with Columbia University, University of Wisconsin, University of California-Irvine, Johns Hopkins University, New York University, and University of Michigan faculty.

- Media interviews and opinion essays in The New York Times, Vox, The American Prospect, CNBC, Slate, the Huffington Post, and the Brookings Institution’s Intersections podcast.
- A partnership with the Brookings Institution to organize a national conference to examine a universal child allowance, with Vonnie McLloyd, Ewart A.C. Thomas Collegiate Professor of Psychology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.
- Expert analysis to lawmakers on Capitol Hill.
- Sens. Michael Bennet (CO) and Sherrod Brown (OH) introduce The American Family Act of 2017 to dramatically expand the child tax credit, which currently offers up to \$1,000 a year for families with significant earnings but little or nothing for many poor people.

Read the New York Times coverage of the universal child allowance policy impact: myumi.ch/L49Dj

THE BIG PICTURE: MAPPING MICHIGAN POVERTY

Poverty Solutions has developed a simple snapshot of eight poverty-related indicators for stakeholders, including policymakers, community organizations, and the public, to understand the state of poverty in their counties in Michigan. While data is at the center of the work of a research institution like the University of Michigan, many outside audiences do not have the expertise or time to access the incredible amount of publicly available data about poverty.



Combining data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the United Way’s ALICE report, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s County Health Rankings, and others, Poverty Solutions provided an easy way to understand key poverty takeaways in counties across Michigan.

The map, released in December 2017, shows just eight of the many indicators currently in our database. Poverty Solutions will continue to add indicators and create custom maps for stakeholders interested in specific facets of poverty.

See the map at: myumi.ch/JWVyM

STATEWIDE

Population	9,935,233
Median Income	\$47,944
Percent Below Poverty Level	15.1%
Under 18 Years Below Poverty Level	22.1%
ALICE	24.9%
With Food Stamps/SNAP Benefits	14.7%
Male Life Expectancy	76
Female Life Expectancy	80
Percent Single-Parent Households	32%

NORTHERN MICHIGAN

MID-MICHIGAN

WESTERN MICHIGAN

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN



PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

INFORMING AND TESTING **INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE PREVENTION AND ALLEVIATION** OF POVERTY

Alexandrie Lintz-Suarez was one of 40 youth participants working in departments across campus over the summer of 2017 as part of U-M's Summer Youth Employment Program.

MAKING PROGRESS, TOGETHER

This year, Poverty Solutions supported 11 new projects representing the majority of U-M's schools and colleges, and focusing on at least one of three core domains:

- Expanding economic opportunity to reduce poverty
- Reducing educational disparities to promote social mobility
- Addressing the health consequences of poverty

Learn more about these projects and programs at poverty.umich.edu/projects.

Summer Youth Employment Program

Poverty Solutions partnered with Washtenaw County and Michigan Works! Southeast on a pilot employment program that paired youth, ages 16-24, with faculty and staff to help them gain paid work experience, mentorship, and life-skills training. Youth were placed in a variety of jobs across the scope of the U-M campus.

Research shows that large disparities in education and economic outcomes persist for youth from different parts of the nation, including Washtenaw County. Summer jobs programs for at-risk youth can close these gaps. Such programs can provide income for youth and their families, provide structured summer activities, improve later academic performance, and reduce criminal activity.

This project is one of the first of its kind to be conducted by a major university, and is unique because it will measure the impact and use research to determine best practices. With this program, U-M is leading the way for similar flagship institutions with an obligation to their communities to seek out strategies to address disparities.

"The skills that you learn are great and help you build your resume. Who doesn't like having the University of Michigan on their resume?"

Nolan Escobar, summer 2017 participant



As participants in the U-M Summer Youth Employment Program, Alexandrie Lintz-Suarez oversaw daily operations at Maggie's Marketplace while Nolan Escobar (lower image) helped out at on-campus events.



Community Health Workers in Detroit's Cody Rouge Neighborhood

One effective approach to improve health is through community-based health workers working in their own neighborhoods. Such positions provide jobs, lower costs for health care, improve health and social outcomes, and create a positive cycle that works against poverty.

This unique partnership between U-M's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation, the Detroit Health Department, Medicaid Health Plans, the Joy-Southfield Community Development Corporation, health centers, and other community organizations is developing and evaluating a new model that employs community health workers to serve the Detroit Cody Rouge neighborhood in a financially sustainable way. If successful and found

to be cost-effective, it is a model that could be disseminated as a comprehensive approach to significantly improve the physical and economic well-being of residents in Detroit and strengthen neighborhood networks of support.

Learn more in this video: myumi.ch/a0kmG

Transportation Insecurity: Developing a Measure to Capture an Understudied Dimension of Poverty

Transportation insecurity is an often overlooked dimension of poverty, even though problems with transportation have been shown to exacerbate symptoms of poverty. Currently, there is no federal

data on "measures of material hardship" accounting for problems with transportation, unlike other poverty-related challenges. This project aims to develop the Transportation Security Index, a tool that operationalizes transportation insecurity by measuring an individual's ability to get to the places they need to go regardless of transportation used or area of residence. It will be made available for use by researchers, policymakers, and community groups interested in examining the causes and consequences of transportation insecurity and its relationship to poverty. It may also be used to evaluate how transportation-related policies and programs affect socioeconomic mobility.

Building Reliable Public Opinion Data for the Detroit Area | MorningSide Neighborhood

The Detroit Metropolitan Area Communities Study (DMACS) is an innovative online survey of Detroit residents that provides high-quality information on how Detroiters feel about the most pressing social and economic issues they face. An interdisciplinary team of researchers from the Institute for Social Research and the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy are in conversations with community organizations and City of Detroit departments about using DMACS in community assessments and evaluations.

Building on the 53-year legacy of the Detroit Area Study, a training tool that from 1951 to 2004 provided students at U-M with hands-on experience in conducting surveys, DMACS and Poverty Solutions are bringing community residents and U-M students together in a door-to-door effort to increase participation in the online survey. This innovative approach enabled DMACS to overcome some of the emerging challenges in survey research, producing a sample that was more representative than a previous citywide survey that lacked this in-person touch at an affordable cost.

In July 2017, DMACS brought together neighborhood residents and students to conduct a survey in MorningSide, a community on the east side of Detroit. The survey effort led to nearly 250 Detroiters providing their responses to a host of questions on their changing community, such as the impact of local investments to their experiences with public transportation and crime.

Going forward, DMACS will expand the door-to-door strategy to neighborhoods across Detroit and the greater metropolitan area.

Helping a House Remain a Home: Poverty Tax Exemption

Each year, non-payment of property taxes causes thousands of Detroit residents to lose their homes to tax foreclosure. The Poverty Tax Exemption (PTE) reduces or eliminates property taxes for low-income homeowners, preventing devastating financial consequences of property tax foreclosure. Homes lost to foreclosure are often never reoccupied, leaving the city and taxpayers to pay for the damage from demolition costs, declining property values, and diminished quality of life. But many qualifying residents are unaware of the PTE, or hindered by the complex process to receive it. The School of Public Health is partnering with United Community Housing Coalition on a concerted effort to identify, educate, and streamline the PTE availability for the approximately 12,000 homeowners who qualify. This effort could immediately impact Detroit homeowners on the edge of foreclosure, while simultaneously mitigating neighborhood blight.

See the full 2017 list of grant project awards on page 19.



U-M Summer Youth Employment Program participant Tyisha Thompson (left), pictured here with Administrative Assistant Jennifer Garrett, works at the Population Studies Center in the Institute for Social Research, where she has learned more about Ph.D. programs.

COMMUNITY-ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Building on what works, the University of Michigan has a history of translating research into action through community-academic partnership. In addition to leveraging the strengths of U-M’s administrative leadership units, Poverty Solutions is partnering with two leading entities on campus to build upon community relationships, networks, and engagement opportunities already thriving.

Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center

For nearly 25 years, the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center (Detroit URC) has been working to promote health equity in Detroit. Using a community-based participatory research approach, the Detroit URC asks research questions of direct relevance to the community and translates the knowledge gained into programs and policies that build on the community’s resources and strengths. The Detroit URC includes repre-

sentatives from deeply embedded organizations in Detroit and academic researchers from U-M. It is a nationally recognized leader in creating equitable, action-based research partnerships.

This year, Poverty Solutions and the Detroit URC came together to launch a small grant program for community-academic research teams seeking to identify innovative strategies for poverty prevention and alleviation. Grantees received expert training and guidance from the Detroit URC’s long-standing community and academic partners and implemented collaborative approaches to understanding and addressing poverty-related challenges in the state.

Ginsberg Center

The U-M Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning works to cultivate and steward mutually beneficial partnerships between communities and U-M in order to advance social

change for the public good. It is one of the nation’s preeminent centers for service learning, and has fostered numerous community-university partnerships working toward equitable access to social, political, and economic power.

Last summer, Ginsberg played a fundamental role in bringing together stakeholders from Washtenaw County and U-M to expand a countywide summer youth employment program to the U-M campus. As a result, the program doubled in size and 40 youth from the county were employed in jobs on campus. The Ginsberg Center also played a key role in co-hosting community, university, and government stakeholders for a pre-kindergarten education equity policy roundtable in the fall.

Poverty Solutions supports Ginsberg’s efforts to engage students and faculty in community-university research opportunities.

POVERTY SOLUTIONS 2017 GRANT AWARDS

Collaborative Community-Academic Research Awards

BARRIER BUSTING IN THE HOPE VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

- Michael Gordon, U-M Ross School of Business
- Noel Tichy, U-M Ross School of Business
- Stephanie Moore, Focus: HOPE
- Julie Phenis, Focus: HOPE
- Debbie Fisher, Focus: HOPE

HELPING A HOUSE REMAIN A HOME

- Roshanak Mehdipanah, U-M School of Public Health
- Alexa Eisenberg, U-M School of Public Health
- Ted Phillips, United Community Housing Coalition
- Michele Oberholtzer, United Community Housing Coalition

IMPROVING HEALTH AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

- Michele Heisler, U-M Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation, Medical School
- David J. Law, Joy-Southfield Community Development Corporation
- Joneigh Khaldun, Detroit Health Department

PRESERVING LOW-INCOME HOUSING IN DETROIT

- Margaret Dewar, U-M Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
- Lan Deng, U-M Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
- Sarida Scott, Community Development Advocates of Detroit
- LaToya Morgan, Community Development Advocates of Detroit
- Julie Schneider, Detroit Department of Housing and Revitalization
- Tahirih Ziegler, Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- Dennis Quinn, Cinnaire
- Yulonda Byrd, Cinnaire

- Victor Alba, Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- Tim Thorland, Southwest Housing Solutions
- Kirby Burkholder, IFF

Faculty Research Projects

TARGETING POVERTY IN THE COURTS

- J.J. Prescott, U-M Law School

POOR, INVISIBLE, AND LEFT BEHIND: UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL INSTABILITY, MATERIAL HARDSHIP, AND THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AMONG LOW-INCOME RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

- Addie Weaver, U-M School of Social Work

IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY VIA PHYSICAL CROWDSOURCED TASKS

- Tawanna Dillahunt, U-M School of Information
- Walter S. Lasecki, U-M College of Engineering

DOES THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REDUCE HOUSING INSTABILITY?

- Natasha Pilkauskas, U-M Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
- Katherine Michelmore, Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

TRANSPORTATION INSECURITY: DEVELOPING A MEASURE TO CAPTURE AN UNDERSTUDIED DIMENSION OF POVERTY

- Alexandra K. Murphy, U-M College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, Population Studies Center
- Jamie Griffin, U-M Survey Research Center
- Alix Gould-Werth, U-M Population Studies Center and Mathematica Policy Research

THE SYSTEMATIC EFFECTS OF SNAP BENEFIT CUTS ON WASHTENAW COUNTY POVERTY ALLEVIATION INSTITUTIONS

- Lesli Hoey, U-M Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
- Sue Ann Savas, U-M School of Social Work
- Andrew Jones, U-M School of Public Health
- Sandra K. Danziger, U-M Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
- Mary Jo Callan, Director, U-M Edward Ginsberg Center
- Markell Miller, Food Gatherers
- Kate Kraus, Fair Food Network

Community Ventures: Sustaining Living Wage Jobs

- H. Luke Shaefer, U-M Poverty Solutions
- Brian Jacob, U-M Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
- Elisabeth Gerber, U-M Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Summer Youth Employment Program

- H. Luke Shaefer, U-M Poverty Solutions
- Mary Jo Callan, U-M Ginsberg Center
- U-M Human Resources
- U-M Youth Policy Lab

DMACS

- Jeffrey Morenoff, Institute for Social Research, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
- Elisabeth Gerber, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, Institute for Social Research
- Conan Smith, Washtenaw County Commissioner
- Joshua Rivera, U-M Poverty Solutions

DETROIT PARTNERSHIP

U-M WAS FOUNDED IN DETROIT AND
WE'VE BEEN PARTNERS EVER SINCE

BRIGHTMOOR

CODY ROUGE

CENTRAL
WOODWARD

NORTHEND

EAST SIDE

OSBORN

MORNINGSIDE

CONNER

CHALMERS

CHADSEY CONDON

SOUTHWEST

CORKTOWN

The University of Michigan supports several efforts and partnerships from a variety of disciplines that seek to promote economic mobility in Detroit.

For more information and a full list of projects, visit:
poverty.umich.edu/projects-in-detroit

DETROIT HAS A POVERTY RATE
MORE THAN DOUBLE

THE NATIONAL AVERAGE—
ROUGHLY 35%

THE CHILD POVERTY RATE
IS EVEN HIGHER—
MORE THAN 50%

2016 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

WORKING TOGETHER

Despite the recent economic recovery in Detroit, there remain systemic challenges rooted in a history of racial discrimination and segregation in this city and many others across the U.S. As Mayor Mike Duggan emphasized in his 2017 Mackinac Policy Conference address, in order for Detroit to understand where it's going, it must know where it's been.

Poverty Solutions and the City of Detroit have recently joined forces to identify, shape, and evaluate promising initiatives and policy strategies aimed at increasing economic mobility and breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty in Detroit.

This **Partnership on Economic Mobility** will:

- Leverage resources from across the university to support and add capacity to city initiatives
- Provide best-practice research and analysis to improve and expand current programs and pilot new programs
- Track and evaluate individual programs and measure overall impact of city initiatives

U-M's work with the Detroit's Mayor's Office and departments of health, workforce, housing and revitalization, and jobs and economy are already making headway, including work on the poverty tax exemption project (School of Public Health), a new residential survey model (Institute for Social Research, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy), community health workers in the Cody Rouge neighborhood (Medical School, School of Social Work, School of Public Health, Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation), and new discussions on chronic absenteeism (School of Education, Institute for Social Research, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, Youth Policy Lab).

EXTENDING LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

ENGAGING STUDENTS AND THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

U-M teaches more than 100 poverty-related courses through its schools and colleges, including:

- Architecture
- Business
- Dentistry
- Education
- Kinesiology
- Law
- Literature, Science, and the Arts
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Information
- Social Work

Further, events and engaged-learning opportunities have increased the number of students introduced to core content on poverty, and helped to prepare emerging scholars for successful careers in research, policy, and practice that significantly contribute to poverty prevention and alleviation.

Leading the Conversation

Poverty Solutions and university partners across campus hosted more than 13 talks featuring U-M and national experts on poverty-related topics reaching more than 5,000 students and faculty.

MARCH 21, 2017

Race, Poverty, and Housing in American Cities: What Do We Do Now?

2017 Marc & Constance Jacobson Lecture, LSA Institute for the Humanities
[Matthew Desmond](#) and [Alex Kotlowitz](#)

MARCH 29, 2017

Abandoned Families: Social Isolation in the 21st Century with the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and School of Social Work
[Kristin Seefeldt](#)

APRIL 7, 2017

Poverty Solutions Engagement Series: Making Housing More Affordable

APRIL 19, 2017

Summer Youth Programs: Promising Policy, Opportunity Youth, Enhancements of Educational Outcomes and Collaborative Processes
[Trina Shanks](#) and [Christine Robinson](#)

MAY 1, 2017

Should the U.S. Enact a Universal Child Allowance? (Washington, D.C.) with the Brookings Institution, American Enterprise Institute, University of Wisconsin's Institute for Research on Poverty, and Columbia University's Center on Poverty and Social Policy
[Vonnie McLloyd](#), [H. Luke Shaefer](#), and [colleagues](#)

MAY 3, 2017

Cradle to Kindergarten: A New Plan to Combat Inequality (Washington, D.C.) with the U-M School of Education, Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality, and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
[Christina Weiland](#) and [colleagues](#)

JULY 25, 2017

Economic Mobility Convening in Detroit with the Detroit Urban Research Center

SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

U-M Detroit Bicentennial Celebration Panel on Innovative Initiatives on Economic Mobility

OCTOBER 4, 2017

Escaping Poverty Through Entrepreneurship: A Policy Talk with Arthur Brooks with the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

OCTOBER 6, 2017

The Changing Geography of Poverty
[Scott Allard](#)

OCTOBER 18, 2017

Cradle to Kindergarten: A New Plan to Combat Inequality (Ann Arbor) with the U-M School of Education
[Christina Weiland](#) and [colleagues](#)

NOVEMBER 9–10, 2017

Bicentennial Symposium: Impact on Inequality with the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and Institute for Social Research

NOVEMBER 16, 2017

What Will 2018 Hold for Low-income People? A View from Washington with Olivia Golden from the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) (Ann Arbor)



Students participated in a three-hour-long poverty simulation. They were assigned roles in families and experienced the day-to-day life of those living paycheck to paycheck.



Poverty Simulation

Poverty Solutions partnered with UM-Dearborn's Office of Metropolitan Impact and Office of Student Success to host a poverty simulation open to all students. Developed by the Missouri Community Action Network, the poverty simulation is a robust pedagogical tool meant to give students an idea of the challenges families in poverty face daily: feeding a family, paying bills, finding employment, and navigating many other barriers. The goal was to have students reflect and learn ways to take action, promote justice, and be an ally to those living in a real state of poverty.

Eighty students participated from across the schools and colleges, including the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy; and the School for Environment and Sustainability. Professionals from surrounding community organizations played the roles of social service organizations and included the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, ACCESS, Community Action Network of Washtenaw County, the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County, Food Gatherers, and the Ypsilanti Health Center.

Learn more in this video: myumi.ch/LPVwY

A New Academic Experience

In partnership with the Community Action and Social Change (CASC) minor program, based out of the School of Social Work, Poverty Solutions began offering a certificate program in January 2018. This certificate will allow CASC students to focus on poverty alleviation and prevention and intentionally connect with Poverty Solutions through events, research opportunities, and mentorships.

The CASC minor, which currently has 250 undergraduate students enrolled each year, is a minor flexibly designed for students to build skills and knowledge to enact social change.



“We are excited to partner with Poverty Solutions on this new opportunity. Students in the CASC minor are known for their interest in applying their talents in response to a social need or problem. This new certificate in poverty solutions, action, and engagement will provide students with knowledge they can use to further ignite their dedication to pursue solutions to the poverty challenges of our time.”

Professor Katie Richards-Schuster,
Director of Undergraduate Minor Programs
and Assistant Professor of Social Work

Rapid Response Student Team

In the past year, Poverty Solutions has employed 20 undergraduate students from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, School of Social Work, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, School of Information, and School of Public Health. These action-based research assistants helped Poverty Solutions staff and faculty affiliates meet project needs in real time by assisting with everything from qualitative data collection for a randomized control trial evaluation of a workforce development project and implementation of U-M's Summer Youth Employment Program to census data analysis for a map project and literature reviews for the Detroit partnership.

FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE

“As a first-generation college student from the working class at a largely affluent university, my experience has provided transparency to cross-class interactions, relationships, and issues many can't see. As I began to understand these feelings, I started working with other University of Michigan students on a cross-class dialogue initiative, CLASS (Collaborative Learning Across Socioeconomic Statuses). The same group of students has been working with other student leaders and faculty members to create an academic minor centralized around the study of social class systems — approaching the study in an intersectional and interdisciplinary way.

“Working at Poverty Solutions has allowed me to bring my personal and academic interests into a more professional space. It has also enabled me to refine my career interests, network with individuals doing remarkable work, and learn valuable skills I can use in the future. During my time as a research assistant with Poverty Solutions, I have contributed to important research that has the potential to impact many people, learned more about myself and the communities surrounding me, and been given many opportunities to explore my passions.”

Zachary Tingley, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, Political Science and Sociology,
Minor in the Environment, B.A. 2019





Poverty Solutions partnered with the Munger Graduate Residences Case Competition by asking students to create an action plan to effectively address the root causes of poverty. The winning team (lower photo) included Kenji Kaneko (left) and Ariana Almas (far right).

Graduate Workshops on Poverty and Inequality

This workshop series engages Ph.D. students in an ongoing dialogue on poverty in America and explores poverty-related research. Past speakers have included Marci Ybarra from the University of Chicago, Scott Allard from the University of Washington, Barbara Israel from the School of Public Health, and William Elliot from the School of Social Work. Students are encouraged to discuss their research as well as professional trajectories.

Munger Graduate Residences Case Competition on Poverty

Each semester, Munger Graduate Residences challenges transdisciplinary teams of graduate students to address important topics through its Case Competition. More than 150 graduate students representing 15 schools and colleges have participated in the competitions since the building opened in 2015. Poverty Solutions partnered with Munger for its Fall 2017 Case Competition, asking students to create an action plan to effectively address the root causes of poverty using a strategy of their team's choosing and \$100,000 of fictional seed money. Ten teams submitted ideas representative of the diversity of expertise necessary to solve contemporary societal problems in a world that is increasingly volatile, uncertain, ambiguous, and complex. Some focused their projects on city-specific poverty alleviation in places such as Flint and Detroit, while others approached the challenge from social and political lenses, considering how the social identities of those in positions of power impact community economics.

This year's winning team members were Ariana Almas and Kenji Kaneko, representing the Ross School of Business and the School of Information. Their proposed mobile app, ServiceScout, would help those in need of safety net services access eligibility information and navigate application processes.



U-M students discussed race, poverty, and housing in American cities with authors Matthew Desmond and Alex Kotlowitz at a lecture held in early 2017.

FORWARD MOMENTUM

In the years to come, we envision Poverty Solutions as a resource that policymakers, researchers, and community members instinctively turn to find the best, most effective strategies for tackling poverty.

In the next year, we'll be expanding our focus in a number of areas with the potential to inform large-scale, transformative projects. Some of our goals include:

- Getting out to communities across Michigan to understand the unique challenges they face and how U-M's resources and expertise can address them.
- Significantly expanding the Summer Youth Employment Program, allowing more area youth and U-M departments to connect and contribute to the economic mobility of young people in our region.

- Partnering with the City of Detroit and working with its departments to reach and connect with more Detroiters about the programs and policies that impact their lives and economic mobility.
- Digging deeper into innovative ideas for national welfare reform, including hosting a New Directions in Basic Income Workshop that will bring together leading scholars and early-career scholars from across the nation to delve into this timely topic.
- Continuing to pilot more important intervention ideas across campus through our grant programs to grow projects into actionable, scalable solutions.
- Expanding our student engagement to encompass a breadth of events, activities, work, and experiential learning opportunities aimed at deepening their understanding of the root causes of poverty.

JOIN US.

For more information: poverty.umich.edu

OUR TEAM

DIRECTOR

H. Luke Shaefer

Associate Professor, School of Social Work and Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Julia Weinert

**COMMUNICATIONS AND
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR**
Kristen Kerecman

PROJECT MANAGER

Joshua Rivera

STRATEGIC PROJECTS MANAGER

Kate Naranjo

SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Jennifer Erb-Downward

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Damien Siwik

WEB DESIGNER

Raynard Mirville

POVERTY SOLUTIONS

DEANS' GOVERNING BOARD 2017

Michael Barr

Joan and Sanford Weill Dean of Public Policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy; Roy F. and Jean Humphrey Proffitt Professor of Law

Elizabeth Cole

Professor of Women's Studies, Afroamerican and African Studies, and Psychology; Associate Dean, Department of Social Sciences, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Scott DeRue

Edward J. Frey Dean of Business, Ross School of Business; Stephen M. Ross Professor of Business

James P. Holloway

Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Vice Provost for Global Engagement and Interdisciplinary Academic Affairs

Sharon Kardia

Senior Associate Dean for Administration and Professor of Epidemiology, School of Public Health

David Lam

Professor of Economics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; Research Professor, Population Studies Center; Director, Institute for Social Research

Elizabeth Moje

Dean, School of Education; George Herbert Mead Collegiate Professor of Education and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor; Faculty Associate, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research

Kathleen Sienko

Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Mechanical Engineering; Miller Faculty Scholar Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering; Miller Faculty Scholar Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering

Lynn Videka (Chair)

Dean, School of Social Work; Carol T. Mowbray Professor of Social Work



POVERTY SOLUTIONS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



poverty.umich.edu

Regents of the University of Michigan: Michael J. Behm, Mark J. Bernstein, Shauna Ryder Diggs, Denise Ilitch, Andrea Fischer Newman, Andrew C. Richner, Ron Weiser, Katherine E. White, Mark S. Schlissel, *ex officio*.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity, and Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office for Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388, institutional.equity@umich.edu. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.