

2013 LPV Team Projects

Eco-wise

Team Members: Laurie Davison, Erica Johnson, Ben Murphy, Glenn Posey, Emmanuel Vera

The Eco-wise project was to plan, organize and execute an event to provide best practices and ground-truthing around local clean energy strategies. From this initial description Team Eco- Wise was formed. We morphed our Team Vision to create awareness and provide resources to help municipalities maximize their efficiency with green energy solutions.

After consulting with several subject matter experts in the arena, we identified two areas that we addressed at our event. The first included common barriers inhibiting some municipalities in becoming a Green Community. These barriers include adopting as-of-right sitting and the stretch code into the local building code, and how to successfully balance limited resources while achieving Green Communities status. The second area of focus was to heighten energy efficiency awareness throughout the Pioneer Valley.

Each team member actively contributed to all conversations, decision making, and work load which led to successful event in early May.

Next Generation Pioneers²

Team Members: Nicolle Cestero, Nicholas Criscitelli, Charity Day, Jason Randall, Alfonso Santaniello, Mark Sayre

The focus of team Next Generation Pioneers² is to continue the great work started by members of last year's class which resulted in a survey of nearly 700 young professionals throughout Pioneer Valley and surrounding areas. The survey was conducted to understand the key factors that attract and keep young professionals in the Valley. Our group met with sponsors in March to disseminate the survey results and provide a presentation on the important points in the survey results. The goal for our project is to communicate the data provided by the survey and to begin a dialogue among decision makers and stakeholders regarding possible solutions for the main issues identified in the survey.

Oasis

Team Members: Suzanne Bowles, Ayanna Crawford, Julie Federman, Julie Gentile, Lori Kerwood, Dawn Koloszyk, Julio Martinez, Maureen Trafford

As part of the Leadership Pioneer Valley program, members of project team Oasis chose to explore the intersections of increasing access to markets for locally produced food and addressing the region's major health issues which include obesity and diabetes. Early in our research on this topic team

members were struck by the coexistence of our region's thriving locally produced food sector and the tremendous food insecurity in this region, which is a significant indicator of health disparity.

Project Oasis examined the intersection of two important movements: the local food movement and the movement to address hunger in our communities— with the aim of improving health outcomes for those in our region's most food insecure communities.

Team Oasis intended to create a culturally competent survey to connect consumer desires for fresh food in food insecure areas with local farmers who were providing these foods through Farmer's Markets throughout the Pioneer Valley. While researching possible venues to work on this topic, we encountered several excellent resources with similar visions and goals, but from a slightly different perspective or with different objectives. Thus we changed the focus of our project to creating an asset table describing the location, description and mission of these fresh, local nutritious food resources in an effort to connect the resources with one another.

Titans

Team Members: Kyle Kate Dudley, Tony Franco, Sarah Schatz, Danielle Williams, Donald Mitchell, Jon Queenin

For the past several years, residents of the Pioneer Valley have been talking about the casino that is coming to the region. The people of Palmer have been discussing why Palmer is an ideal place for the Mohegan Sun. They say that the revenue it will generate will help rebuild their struggling community. The residents of Holyoke had a vigorous debate about whether a casino would be a driver of economic development for their city. Multiple casinos have spoken to Springfield residents, telling them why a downtown casino will revitalize their city. Advocates for Palmer have told us why Springfield is a bad location for a casino. Advocates for Springfield have told us that their casino's owner is more local than the Palmer casino owner. The mayor of Northampton has told his constituents that a casino in a nearby town will negatively impact their downtown. And as far as we can tell, the communities of Westfield, Greenfield, Agawam, and Hatfield have not had any formal discussions about the casino because it will not be located in their community.

The Titans conducted a survey of community leaders to gauge their opinion on the casino, its implications for the entire Pioneer Valley, and their thoughts on regional collaboration. While not a scientific survey, by 6-1 margin, people do not feel there is adequate dialogue on the issues the region is facing. Our project hopes to be the first step towards starting a much needed regional conversation.

Trailblazers

Team Members: Jessica Atwood, Jeff Bagg, Nancy Buffone, Georgia Moore, Debra Roussel, Anthony Wilson

The Pioneer Valley is full of historical sites, interesting artifacts and legendary people and yet, there is no regional approach to the shared history of the Pioneer Valley. Team Trailblazers has sought to connect the past with the future and, through the use of social media, will inspire curiosity in others to discover our heritage.

Throughout the past year, we have researched different social media platforms in order to find the best tools with which to promote the hidden and not-so-hidden stories, artifacts, and sites throughout the Pioneer Valley. At the same time, we reached out to the Pioneer Valley History Network and, through an online survey, to historical commissions, municipal and community leaders, and legislators to develop a list of historical sites in the region.

Our final product includes two online tools for historical and tourism entities to use to promote the rich history of the Pioneer Valley: SCVNGR and Foursquare. In addition to developing pilot "tours" on both platforms, we have also developed a overview of social media resources, the benefits and limitations of such resources, and a listing of historical sites to share with organizations throughout the Valley.

Through these social media platforms, we are excited to share the rich history of Pioneer Valley in a unique and interesting way.

WU

Team Members: Krista Benoit, Jeannette Gordon, Roshonda DeGraffenreid, Ljuba Marsh, Irma Medina, Lidya Rivera, Janice Watson, Tracye Whitfield

Our project, "higher education", has been focused on providing the resources, tools, and opportunities it takes for students to go further in their education. WU's goal is to make the process easier to prospective college students and families, in the Pioneer Valley by creating a website that provides both information faced with social and economic challenges. We identified the name of our website as Valley CABS, which stands for **C**reative, **A**chieve, **B**elieve, and **S**ucceed. The website will provide simple and clear information to prepare families for the college admission process. The website will also have Inspirational stories and videos with a variety of individuals who, despite obstacles, succeeded at higher education."

What is unique about our website is that our roots are in Pioneer Valley and we are invested in improving opportunities in higher education for our surrounding communities. Our focus is on local support services and personal stories of success.