STEPs’ mission:
To provide participatory, utilization-focused evaluation for organizations serving children, youth, and families in poverty.
As hard as we work, you’d think we would have worked ourselves out of a job by now. Sadly, poverty is persistent. We enjoy the challenge of partnering with organizations who are serving children, youth, and families in poverty through our provision of program evaluation services, training, and support.

What a joy and privilege too to be at UNO where community engagement is not only encouraged and supported, but a strategic goal. We also feel fortunate to join the community of organizations in the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center; the office space, the meeting rooms, the technology, the parking—it’s all so conducive to collaboration and good work. We’re grateful to our academic home, the Grace Abbott School of Social Work.

We continued to experience incredible growth this year. Dr. Keyonna King joined our program evaluation team. She came all the way from southern California and brought incredible public health knowledge in addition to program evaluation and research skills and experience. Jon Stanton also moved to full-time as our operations coordinator. This year, we began offering program evaluation capacity-building training and consulting to small nonprofits in the Omaha area, and provided many needs assessments and social returns on investment. We will continue to assemble teams and offer approaches that meet the needs of the community organizations we serve. We look forward to another great year of program evaluation and community engagement!

Jeanette Harder, Ph.D., Project Director  Pam Ashley, M.Ed., Program Evaluator  Keyonna King, Dr.P.H., Program Evaluator
Goal 1: Student-centered
- Staffed, in part, by graduate students who are mentored by professional staff

Goal 2: Academically excellent
- Founded and staffed by faculty
- Facilitated service-learning
- Produced conference presentations and peer-reviewed manuscripts

Goal 3: Community engaged
- Partnered with 16+ community nonprofit organizations
- Offered capacity-building assistance to area nonprofits
STEPS’ Team Members

Jeanette Harder, Ph.D.; Project Director
Professor, Grace Abbott School of Social Work

Pam Ashley, M.Ed.
Program Evaluator

Keyonna King, Dr.P.H.
Program Evaluator

Jon Stanton, B.A.
Operations Coordinator

Other contributors: Kym Caddell, Alyssa Cardona, Carly Rozeboom, Katie Schmelzle, Samantha Weiss

FACULTY AFFILIATES

Jodi McQuillen, Ph.D. & Jieru Bai, Ph.D.
Grace Abbott School of Social Work
Faculty Affiliates

Chris Goodman, Ph.D.
School of Public Administration
Faculty Affiliate

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Joe Kapusnick Forrest
MSW student

Jessica Groeneweg
MSW student

Andrea Bradley
MSW/MPH student

Natalie Scarpa
MSW/MPA student

Jennifer Sedivy
MSW student

Amy Wattier
MSW student

Keyonna King
MSW student
STEPs’ Community Partners and Services

Working together to alleviate poverty.

FUNDING AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS
Community Action of Nebraska, Inc.
Omaha Community Foundation
Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare

CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE
Better Together - Heartland Family Service
Financial Success Program (United Way)
Nebraska Adoption Project - Nebraska Families Collaborative
Nebraska CASA Association
Prevention Means Progress – Me360 – Heartland Family Service
Village Basketball Alliance - Hope Center for Kids

EDUCATION
Avenue Scholars Foundation
Children’s Scholarship Fund of Omaha
Christ Child Learning Center - Catholic Charities
Early Head Start and Head Start - Community Action of Lancaster and Saunders Counties
GOALS Center
MCC Express - Metropolitan Community College
SummerWorks - UNO

Analysis Methods:
- Process Evaluation
- Outcome Evaluation
- Qualitative Coding
- Needs Assessment
- Statistical Analysis
- Digital Storytelling
- Systems Map
- Literature Review
- Logic Model
- Data Visualization
- Evaluative Thinking
- Interviews & Focus Groups
What our community partners are saying about us...

“Doing evaluation right is not easy, but you and your team are making it doable and that will strengthen the Omaha community in the long run. Thank you for your vision, passion and commitment to quality evaluation in our community.”
~Financial Success Program

“There is an effective working relationship. I do not hesitate to contact them with ideas, suggestions, concerns, etc. I have seen that they do listen to us through the results of their work.”
~Nebraska CASA Association

“It has been great working with STEPs. The staff are knowledgeable about program evaluation and are helpful in addressing our program’s needs and timeline. STEPs’ program is a critical/essential component to our work and driving the ROI information for investors and partnerships.”
~SummerWorks

“The STEPs team did a wonderful job engaging a new agency into a program evaluation process. The STEPs team is very engaging and easy to work with. They often went above and beyond and were able to explain complex topics to the agency staff who had less knowledge in the area of program evaluation. They made the program evaluation process easy and comfortable.”
~GOALS Center
Accomplishments
As a community-engaged organization, STEPs made dozens of presentations in 2015-2016

- American Evaluation Association
- UNO Research & Creative Activity Fair
- Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
- EN4MRB (regional program evaluation)
- Council on Social Work Education
- Program evaluation capacity-building training series
- Countless presentations to our community partners

Below: More than 30 local agencies participated in our program evaluation capacity-building training series, followed by individual consultations.

Above: Jennifer Sedivy received the UNO Research and Creative Activity Fair Meritorious Award for her poster on treatment fidelity.

Above: Andrea Bradley was selected as the UNO Graduate Student Worker of the Year!