



Fall 2001

New RFP Focuses on Community Engagement

Common sense tells us that a healthy, vital community with actively involved citizens goes hand in hand with child well-being, strong neighborhoods, good schools and a robust economy.

Simple goals, however, are often the most difficult to attain~ and, the research challenge lies in understanding how communities can be mobilized to build, promote and sustain civic engagement and vitality in order to meet child and family needs.

To address this challenge, Families and Communities Together (FACT) Coalition announces its 2001-02 Request for Proposals and new Area of Distinction for research and outreach: Enhancing Civic Engagement and Community Vitality.

FACT seeks to invest in projects that

test innovative approaches and assess strong models for empowering communities.

"FACT's new area will focus on the strengths and challenges facing communities, such as violence, as well as successful programs and ways to work in and learn about communities, like service learning projects" said Gary Anderson, director of MSU's School of Social Work and member of the FACT Advisory Board.

"All of these issues are relevant to the research, teaching and outreach mission of our land-grant university."

Areas of research might include supporting community vitality through parent involvement in schools, volunteerism, out-of-school programs, and neighborhood collaborations. Building social capital and the coordination of services for children and families are also options.

The coalition invites all MSU faculty, Extension staff and community partners to apply for FACT's annual competitive research and outreach grants. The 2001-02 RFP will award approximately six grants of up to \$30,000 for collaborative research on children, youth and family issues.

Proposals may focus on the new area or our continuing area called Youth Development: Communities and Schools.

"Through this grant program, we want to build on strengths in departments across campus and help faculty work together to further our knowledge about community development and vitality," said Anderson.



Strong communities with an active citizenry are the goal of FACT's new Area of Distinction for research and outreach grants: **Enhancing Civic Engagement and Community Vitality.**

For further details on FACT's 2001-02 Request for Proposals and new research focus, visit www.fact.msu.edu

Application forms and further information are available at www.fact.msu.edu.

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Register for Open Forums

If you are a faculty member interested in community based research, or a community professional seeking research expertise, the FACT open forums for the 2001-02 RFP are an ideal place to find partners for your work and learn about FACT grant opportunities.

Register by calling the FACT office at (517) 432-9207 or Email: fact@msu.edu.

Sign up now for one of FACT's annual open forums about the RFP at the Kellogg Center:

**Monday, November 12, 2001
3 to 5 PM in Centennial C**

**Thursday, November 15, 2001
10 AM to Noon in Room 101**

Muslim Immigrants: Youth, Families and Schools

As part of the recent wave of immigration to the U.S., Muslims from around the world are making their home in the Lansing area. These newcomers are grappling with ways to forge an American identity while maintaining their own cultural traditions.

This process can be more arduous for immigrant children who must negotiate intergenerational and cultural issues in addition to the usual growing pains of youth. And, in the wake of the last month's terrorist attacks, the age-old question, "What does it mean to be American?" resonates in complicated ways for Muslims.

MSU researchers, backed by a FACT grant, are studying the social, cultural and religious issues faced by Muslim immigrant youth. In particular, they are examining how schools as engines of social change can facilitate or complicate the integration and assimilation of Muslim immigrants into American society.

"Muslim youth and parents look at the same world with different eyes," said Khalida Zaki, project co-leader and faculty member in the Department of Sociology, "Our goal is to recommend ways to improve parent-child communication, as well as study the

interaction between youth, parents and school teachers."

Although religiously homogenous, the Lansing Muslim community is a culturally and linguistically diverse population. It includes African-Americans, refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Bosnia and Kosovo, as well as people from Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Arab countries.

"A community with such immense unity around religion with acceptance of cultural diversity presents a tremendous opportunity for establishing any after-school or mentoring programs for boys and girls," said Zaki.

In preliminary interviews since September 11th, the researchers have found that women and youth are feeling "fear," and "sadness," but are also describing a greater sense of unity with the local community and the need for raising awareness about Muslims in the U.S. Zaki reports that those interviewed have said, "This has hurt us all; we are all Americans."

The research team also includes Janine Sinno, director of Family and Community Development Services, and Deborah Johnson, professor in Family and Child Ecology.



MSU faculty, backed by a FACT grant, are working with Muslim youth in the Lansing area to research social, cultural and educational issues faced by Muslim immigrants.

Team Studies Impacts of Zero Tolerance

This fall, the FACT Youth Development Area of Distinction (AoD) Team is focusing its efforts on understanding youth in the juvenile justice system and the effect that zero-tolerance laws have on these youth and their communities. FACT invites those interested in these issues to join the group.

The team is establishing a university-based learning community to focus on youth who are either involved in, or at risk for entering the juvenile justice system. The central objective is to bring scholars, policy professionals, and youth professionals together to understand how systemic issues impact youth.

"This FACT AoD Team has a wealth

of information on school expulsion and the effects of zero tolerance policies in Michigan," said Nancy Walker, co-chair of the AoD team and associate director of MSU's Institute for Children, Youth and Families (ICYF).

"Our work is attracting national attention and may well serve as the model for a national study of zero tolerance."

Specifically, the team is examining how school-based zero tolerance policies impact youth, families, schools, communities, and the juvenile justice system. The group is synthesizing information from various studies in order to prepare a briefing report for legislators and other

policy makers in Michigan.

The forthcoming legislative report will address the following questions:

- What is "zero tolerance" and who is affected by it?
- What policies do other states have and how does Michigan compare?
- What happens to those students who are expelled? Those who are given a second chance?
- What are the alternatives to expulsion and how effective are they?
- How do different Michigan constituencies feel about zero tolerance policies?
- Finally, what are Michigan's policy options regarding zero tolerance?



Let Them Eat Cake?

Toddler Nutrition Research Awarded Federal Grant

By Kelly Miller and Tom Oswald

Teaching parents about healthy choices and behaviors for feeding finicky tots remains the mission of the Nutrition Education Aimed at Toddlers (NEAT) project as it begins a new phase of community intervention next year.

NEAT was awarded a federal grant to expand their efforts to promote healthy childhood eating, based on the premise that healthy children grow into healthy adults.

“Research has shown that good eating habits, established early in childhood, can lead to a lifetime of nutrition and a much smaller chance of a child developing an eating disorder,” said Mildred Omar, project leader and professor in MSU’s College of Nursing.

The NEAT program fills an important niche by teaching parents of toddlers how to prepare and feed children according to the particular developmental and nutritional needs of this age group.

“We found that there is quite a bit of intervention and materials out there for parents of infants under one year of age and for preschool, but we didn’t see a lot for one to three year olds, which is a very critical time in childhood development,” said Gayle

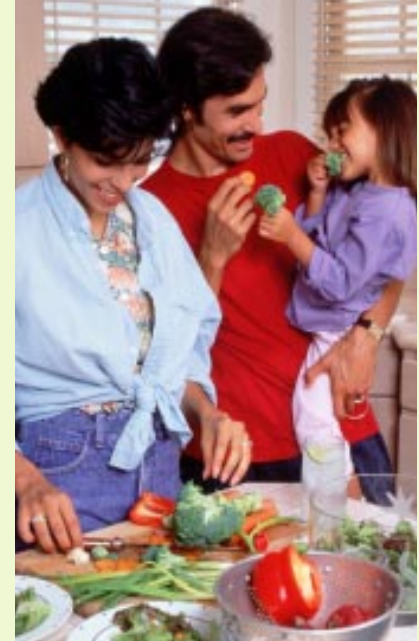
Coleman, project partner and faculty member in MSU Extension Children, Youth and Family Programs.

With the help of a FACT grant, NEAT developed and implemented a pilot intervention program in four counties. With this base, they then applied for and received a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children, Youth and Families. The federal grant will allow NEAT to expand to twenty-three counties.

An expanded NEAT project will not only reach more people and require additional resources, it will increase the number of collaborators involved. Yet, it seems that more cooks in the kitchen is exactly what is needed for NEAT to offer both successful intervention and practical research.

“It’s a challenge to have the communication when you’re dealing with multiple agencies and geographic locations,” says Coleman, “But, if we can overcome some of those challenges it really strengthens the project.”

The project will also be strengthened by educational enhancements developed from lessons learned in the pilot program.



The Nutrition Education Aimed at Toddlers (NEAT) Project was awarded a \$375,000 federal grant to expand their research to 23 Michigan counties and help more families on their path to a “lifetime of nutrition.”

Congratulations to NEAT for growing a FACT seed grant into successful scholarship and outreach.

Join the Youth Development AoD Team:

The FACT Youth Development Area of Distinction Team is co-chaired by:
Francisco Villarruel, Professor, Family & Child Ecology and ICYF
Nancy Walker, Associate Director, ICYF
 Current members include:
Lynne Borden, Family & Child Ecology
Tony Derezhinski, Michigan Association of School Boards
Chris Dunbar, College of Education
Andy Hahn, Family & Child Ecology
Paul Holland, University of Michigan Child Law Center
Ame Lambert, School of Labor & Industrial Relations
Audrey Martini, School of Criminal Justice
Kate Nachtman, James Madison College
Susan Peterson, James Madison College



David Plank, Education Policy Center
Jane Zehnder-Merrell, Michigan League for Human Services
Ruth Zweifler, Student Advocacy Center of Michigan

“First, we offer four in-class experiences that focus on child development, feeding, and nutrition. That’s followed by six months of weekly in-home visits that provide reinforcement of what’s taught in the classes,” said Omar.

This intervention will be refined, implemented and analyzed over the three-year life of this \$375,000 grant. And while each collaborator has their own goals for what NEAT can accomplish, Coleman hopes that projects like this will have direct and positive impacts in the communities they serve.

“I would like to see that we come up with quality education and quality materials so we can effectively reach families,” she said.

With the addition of this federal grant, Coleman may just get her wish.

FACT Welcomes New MSU Deans as Advisors

Michigan State University deans are vital members of the FACT Advisory Board. They represent the diverse goals of colleges across campus and the breadth of children, youth and family work at MSU.

This fall, FACT is honored to welcome three new deans as coalition advisors:

Dean Jeffrey Armstrong of the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources,
Dean Marietta Baba of the College of Social Science, and
Dean Glenn Davis of the College of Human Medicine.

"We are committed to working with the college deans so that MSU will continue to be recognized as a leading institution for the

study of families and communities," said Jan Bokemeier, FACT co-director.

FACT partners with the deans to meet their goals, celebrate academic excellence and to facilitate cross-college efforts that build knowledge and insights about children, families and communities in Michigan.

"Bringing the new deans into the advisory board is an exciting opportunity," said Cheri Booth, FACT co-director, "Each one brings with them new ideas and hopes for their college's connections to FACT."

"Their commitment to putting research into action by linking campus to communities strengthens our board. They are joining a group of individuals who have passion and vision for children, youth and families."

Deans Who Guide FACT:

Carol Ames, Dean, College of Education

Jeffrey Armstrong, Dean, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

Marietta Baba, Dean, College of Social Science

Glenn Davis, Dean, College of Human Medicine

Audrey Gift, Associate Dean, College of Nursing

Allen Jacobs, Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine

Julia Miller, Dean, College of Human Ecology

James Spaniolo, Dean, College of Communications

Dean Marietta Baba College of Social Science



Marietta Baba assumed her role as dean of the College of Social Science this fall. She is a nationally recognized leader in social science research and has been a pioneer in applying anthropological approaches to the dynamics of business growth and development.

She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from her 20-year faculty and administrative career at Wayne State University, where she was most recently

professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology and founding director of the Business and Industrial Anthropology Initiative.

"I wasn't looking to be a dean," said Baba, "but I like it here. The people here are really talented, hard working, and dedicated. It's a warm and nurturing culture."

FACT's collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to children, youth and family research is something Baba understands well. She has led multidisciplinary teams that have received nearly \$2 million in research support from the public and private sector. And, she has served as program director of a National Science Foundation industry-funded research initiative on successful organizational change. She herself holds an M.B.A. from the Advanced Management Program at MSU, and a Ph.D. in physical anthropology from Wayne State University.

"The boundaries between disciplines are blurring," she explains, "Many of our top research programs are interdisciplinary. We've become world class in areas in which we can pull resources from many disciplines to address a topic that is core to MSU."

Dean Baba has initiated a strategic visioning process for the college to identify

their goals, priorities and core values. Through conversations with all stakeholders, they will develop a vision for the college for the next five years and beyond.

Such a process is particularly helpful for a college that spans a wide array of disciplines, from basic science in departments such as psychology to professional development in the School of Labor and Industrial Relations.

"We are a big tent," said Baba, "We like theory and practice; we like advancing fundamental understanding of the human condition, while taking that knowledge and applying it to pressing problems in society and learning from that application."

"We have a unique mission to understand, explain, and interpret people."

After eleven weeks on the job, Dean Baba is settling into her role.

"I lived in downtown Detroit in a high rise apartment on the river. Now I live in a condo on a lake. I'm really enjoying the peace and tranquility. MSU's a great place. It has a proud heritage, a lot of traditions, talented people, a wealth of resources, and a beautiful campus. It's a warm culture. This is the friendliest place I've ever been!"

Interview by Kathleen McKeivitt



Dean Jeffrey Armstrong College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

By Francie Todd



Jeffrey Armstrong comes to the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources from Purdue University, where he most recently served as head of the Department of Animal Sciences.

An internationally known researcher in the area of reproductive physiology, Armstrong also is active in the well-being of food-animals. He chairs the United Egg Producers' Welfare Advisory Committee and is a member of the McDonald's Welfare Advisory Panel.

"Upon arrival at MSU, I was delighted to learn about FACT," said Armstrong, "Healthy families and communities are key to the overall success of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and MSU in general."

"FACT is a great example of the collaborative spirit that is present at MSU working across department, college and partner boundaries. I am especially appreciative of the outstanding leadership provided by MSU Extension and the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station."

Armstrong is currently the president of the American Society of Animal Science

and is also a respected member of the American Association of Swine Practitioners, the American Dairy Science Association, the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists, the Endocrine Society, Gamma Sigma Delta agricultural honor society, the National Association of Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Phi Kappa Phi honor society, the Poultry Science Association, Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society and the Society for the Study of Reproduction.

He has a bachelors degree in animal science from Murray State University, and both master's and doctoral degrees in physiology from North Carolina State University. He is married to Sharon Dare and has two children, Jessica and Zachary.

Dean Armstrong's appointment in the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources includes a tenured professorship in the Department of Animal Science.

Dean Glenn Davis College of Human Medicine

By Marguerite Halversen



Glenn Davis, a graduate of Duke University Medical School, joined the College of Human Medicine (CHM) in May 2001 as dean. A psychiatrist, Dr. Davis has worked

for the last 14 years at the Henry Ford Health System, where he served as chair of Psychiatry, vice president of Behavioral Services, vice president of Academic Affairs, and chief medical officer.

Having been involved with the education of physicians and residents throughout his career, Davis was attracted to CHM's focus on patient-centered, community-based medical education, particularly the commitment to Michigan communities inherent in such an approach and the opportunities it affords CHM students to experience "real" medicine during their education.

A nationally recognized expert in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Davis is currently involved in large-scale epidemiological studies on PTSD. A strong supporter of continuing medical education, he recently presented a seminar to CHM alumni on recognizing and treating this disorder, a

particularly timely presentation in the aftermath of September 11th.

Davis' current interests include the management of health systems, health services research and epidemiology.

The College's motto, "serving the people," ties in well with Davis' interest in health services research—and in FACT. "Since its inception," he notes, "the College of Human Medicine, a community-based medical school, has been fundamentally committed to community programs and services such as those supported by FACT."

Davis has held academic positions at the National Institute of Mental Health, the University of Tennessee, and Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. He is a director on the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and the American Board of Family Practice and serves on the American Board of Medical Specialties.

Growing Staff Complements Coalition Progress

This fall, FACT has added several key staff positions to keep pace with the coalition's growth and progress. FACT welcomes Patricia Farrell as associate director, Laura Allen as coordinating director, Tricia Snedegar as secretary and Kelly Miller as editorial assistant.

"The FACT staff bring extraordinary talents and skills based on rich experiences to our coalition," says Jan Bokemeier, FACT co-director, "With their energy, commitment and creativity, they are creating a wonderful climate for action and

new program directions."

New staff members will join Bokemeier, Cheri Booth, FACT co-director, and Shruti Vaidya, FACT communications officer, for a team building retreat in November to map out the year's goals, priorities and staff roles.

"Having a quality team that can move collective ideas to action pays big dividends as we continue to provide linkages, education and sharing of resources between the MSU campus and communities across the state," said Booth.

Tricia Snedegar Secretary



Tricia Snedegar joined FACT this month as secretary. She is the hub of the coalition office, and keeps the FACT staff organized and functioning smoothly.

Snedegar has extensive experience with administrative work, customer service and providing support for large offices; she has completed coursework at Lansing Community College in administrative studies. She is a native of Indiana, and recently moved back to Michigan from Oklahoma to be closer to her family.

"I'm proud to be a new member of FACT and Michigan State University," says Snedegar, "I hope to apply my commitment to family and my work experience to the growth of FACT."

"Along with my professionalism, I bring to the FACT secretarial position, organization, dependability, and my strongest skill: working with people with a smile."

Kelly Miller Editorial Assistant



Kelly Miller joined FACT this fall as an editorial assistant, and is working with FACT communications and publications.

Kelly is originally from Lansing and attended Everett High School, where she served as the newspaper editor. Now an MSU junior in James Madison College, Kelly is a member of the Honors College working toward dual bachelors degrees in history and social relations.

Kelly comes to FACT fresh from a summer internship with the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C.

"I believe when you take a position, you should not only consider what skills and experience you bring to it, but what skills and experiences you will gain from it," said Miller. "I think FACT has a lot to give."

When she's not working, Kelly enjoys designing web pages, crafts, gardening, and playing the violin. After graduation, Kelly plans to work in the public or nonprofit sector.

Patricia Farrell Associate Director



Patricia Farrell recently joined FACT as associate director. Her educational background includes a master's in social work from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. in educational administration from Michigan State University.

"Working with FACT is a wonderful opportunity for me," said Farrell, "Most of my community work has been locally based and FACT supports collaborative teams and networks from many different geographic areas and disciplines."

"In the coming year, I will work with other FACT team members to strengthen FACT's identity with campus units, our advisory board, and community partners as well as to cultivate collaborations that better meet the needs of families and communities across the state."

Since coming to MSU, Farrell has worked with many community initiatives and programs in her role as a specialist with University Outreach Partnerships. Currently, she is working with an early childhood initiative established by Lansing's Mayor David Hollister. Its goal was to bring together community resources to maximize the development of children 0 to 5 years of age and to link with school based resources for successful K-12 learning. The Blue Ribbon Ready to Succeed Committee was co-chaired by MSU President Peter McPherson.

"I look forward to getting to know the diverse people and groups who make up the FACT Coalition and am pleased to contribute to the innovative work that FACT has already done," Farrell said.



Laura Allen Coordinating Director



Laura Allen joins FACT as coordinating director, and will be responsible for the coordination and administration of FACT activities. Allen has worked at Michigan State University for 25 years. She has a bachelors degree in the management of human resources and has worked with MSU Extension Children, Youth and Family Programs for 10 years.

"I'm very pleased to be a member of the FACT team," she says, "It's exciting to be part of a dynamic effort that blends both the academic and outreach components of MSU with community partners."

In addition to administrative work she

Forums on Student Success

Success for Every Student Every Year: Making It Happen
March 20-21, 2002, MSU Kellogg Center
The Fifth Annual National Conference of MSU's College of Education

Success for Every Student Every Year: Engaging Communities
April 24, 2002, MSU Kellogg Center, 1 - 8 PM
A Forum Sponsored by FACT and MSU's College of Education

This forum will address the pressing need in our state to know more about the relationship between the school community and outside community organizations and agencies. We'll look at available research and successful practices. Our goal is to understand better how communities mobilize to support school success.

Who Should Attend:
Community teams, researchers, faculty, school administrators, and those in decision making roles.

For further information, call FACT at (517) 432-9207.



has worked with the CYF Internship Opportunities program, facilitating placement of MSU undergraduates both on and

off campus. She also provides leadership for Blue Ribbon software, a database program used statewide in MSU Extension offices.

Building Community Assets: Seeds to Roots

By AnnMarie Schneider

Earlier this month, MSU's University Outreach Partnerships held its conference, **From Seeds to Roots: Growing a Strong Community Asset Culture.** Over 30 sessions focused on sustaining asset-based initiatives designed for positive change, strong youth development, and active citizen participation.

"We can never size up the success of these gatherings until we see what occurs in communities, until we witness cutting edge information being applied," said Annette Abrams, director of University Outreach Partnerships.

"Why are participants calling it a success? Because of the people – the

interaction that takes place between participating university faculty and staff, and community leadership from across the state personify what the asset approach is really about - It's about learning together and working together, with some fun mixed in!"

Abrams explained that because of the long-term partnership established between the university and communities, she and other participants will observe the success of the conference unfold during the next year.

"Asset work is not always tangible. Measurable outcomes are a way of taking the abstract and placing it in a more tangible format," Abrams said.

In a keynote address at the conference, Provost Lou Anna K. Simon challenged the

audience to provide measurable outcomes in their work and to inform decision makers of their needs. She also brought a key message of all the keynote speakers together with a second challenge: invite uncommon partners around the table to participate in asset work.

Other keynote speakers included: The Honorable Elizabeth Weaver, Michigan Supreme Court Justice; Thomas Shapiro, Ph.D., award-winning author of *Black Wealth/White Wealth*; and, Rebecca Saito, researcher and consultant on youth and community development, who asked the audience to move beyond raising awareness and to "roll up the sleeves and get to work."

Finally, a youth panel gave insights into today's teen culture. Their message: "Let's keep talking to one another!"

Upcoming Events

Help us keep you informed about events related to children, youth, families and communities. To announce events, contact us at fact@msu.edu or 432-9207. Also, keep checking the updated calendar on our web site www.fact.msu.edu

- Nov 7** **Making Ends Meet By Making Work Pay**
89th Annual Conference of the Michigan League for Human Services
Cobo Hall Detroit
This year's conference will examine a wide range of issues--from income supports to work supports-- that impact the quality of the social safety net in Michigan. Register at www.milhs.org
- Nov 8** **Connecting Resiliency with Youth & Asset Development**
Sponsored by Prevention Network, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM
Integrating research and asset approaches to fit the needs of individual communities. Cost: \$25. You must be pre-registered. Location: Irish Hills Girl Scouts Council 2100 Pink Street, Brooklyn, Michigan (517) 952-6373.
- Nov 12, 15** **FACT Open Forums on RFP and Annual Grant Program**
Monday the 12th, 3-5 PM, Centennial C, Kellogg Center
Thursday the 15th, 10 AM-Noon, Room 101, Kellogg Center
The goal is to bring together potential partners for projects from on and off campus, to provide further details about the RFP, and to address questions about the application process. For more information, visit www.fact.msu.edu, call (517) 432-9207, or Email fact@msu.edu.
- Dec 4** **Michigan Statewide Summit on Resolving Disparities in Infant Mortality**
University of Detroit Mercy, Ward Conference Center, 8:30-4:30 PM
Sponsored by the Michigan Department of Community Health to share compelling data and discuss strategies to resolve disparities. Register at www.hsrnet.com/meeting/infantmortality

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FACT is a collaborative effort of:

The Office of the Provost
Michigan State University Extension
Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station

For more information about FACT:
Visit our web site at
www.fact.msu.edu

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