Proposal Report:

Gordon Neighbourhood House Pay-What-You-Can Community Lunch

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<u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of this project is to experience the process of planning, preparing and serving a healthy, low-cost, sustainable meal to a group of 25-30 people and to indirectly improve food security. We wish to assist the Gordon Neighbourhood House (GNH) in improving their Pay-What-You-Can Wednesday lunch program by providing a nutritious meal that is sustainable for the year.

GNH is a neighbourhood house in the West End of Vancouver that invites all members to participate in its various programs. Its primary mission is to "ensure that the West End of Vancouver is a vibrant and active community, where everyone is empowered to play an active role in civil society" (Gordon Neighbourhood House, 2016). This area is highly populated and culturally diverse (Gordon Neighbourhood House, 2016). The members of this region come from both different backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. Hunger is a major challenge faced by those who live in this region (City of Vancouver, 2012).

GNH uses food to "nourish [the] community in a variety of ways, including the facilitation of intercultural exchange and dialogue, community capacity-building, and community development" (Gordon Neighbourhood House, 2016). They offer Pay-What-You-Can lunches on Wednesdays and five-dollar lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays. According to Chantille Viaud, GNH's Director of Community Food Initiatives, Wednesday lunches have less variety and serve only sandwiches and soup due to the limited budget (personal communication, September 21, 2016).

Our project uses an approach called Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). ABCD is "a strategy for community-driven economic development" (Mathie & Cunningham,

2010). It focuses on the unique capacities and resources in a community while planning for development actions (Valley, 2016).

<u>**Significance**</u>

"Community food security is when all individuals in a community [have] access to affordable, safe, culturally appropriate, ecologically responsible and nutritionally adequate food at all times" (Valley, 2016). Food insecurity is faced by communities all over the world and is affected by many different factors, such as income and age. Nutrition education is a good intervention to improve the lives of those who are food insecure (Eicher-Miller et al., 2009). Like GNH, providing the public with support may help to conquer the roots of food insecurity.

The GNH lunches provide opportunity for community members to enjoy homemade food with fresh, wholesome ingredients at a low cost. Homemade food tends to reduce calories, sodium, and fat intake, which can lead to better health outcomes than eating cheap, processed, convenience foods (Poladian, 2016).

Our goals align with GNH's goals, as we all want to improve the quality of life of community members through healthy eating. We wish to gain a better understanding of the population, and help to eliminate food insecurity. Furthermore, we hope to use this project to educate ourselves on large scale meal planning and provide GNH with a meal for future lunches.

A limitation to our project is that we will only be visiting GNH three times, therefore, will only get a snapshot of the program and will not be able to see the sustainability of our meal. In order to address this issue, we will have a follow-up interview with our community partner to understand the impact of our meal. Another limitation is the community member's resistance to change. Chantille has advised our group that the community members are resistant to change even though Wednesday lunches may be "boring" (personal communication, September 21,

2016). Kuperman (2016) stated that before implementing a healthy change, it is important to consider whether or not your customers will want it.

Objectives and Inquiry Questions

Objectives

Our objectives are to:

1. Select, prepare and serve two low-cost, nutritious and sustainable meals for the GNH Pay-What-You-Can Wednesday lunch program.

2. Help to improve the Wednesday lunch program by creating a meal plan that is enjoyed by the majority of the community members.

Inquiry questions

1. How effective are our meal plans in terms of cost-efficiency, nutrition and sustainability for the GNH Wednesday lunch program?

2. How satisfied are the community members with the food served?

Research Methods

Data Collection and Analysis

We will be conducting a survey through comment cards and interviewing our community partners. Comment cards will be given to the community members to evaluate their satisfaction with our meal. The cards have a ranking scale from 1 to 5. A rating of 5 indicates the highest satisfaction of our meal and a rating of 1 indicates the lowest. There will also be a section for comments to explain the score given. As a group we will be observing and taking notes on the community members' overall experience with the lunch. Additionally, we will be interviewing the GNH chef, program volunteers, and our supervisor to receive feedback from our meal. They will evaluate the cost effectiveness, sustainability and nutrient density of our meal. Based on the

comments from participants and community partners, they will determine if our meal will continue to be served at Wednesday lunches.

Sample comment card:

Date: Wednesday October 26th, 2016.

Please rate your meal and explain your choice. (1 = poor, 5 = exceptional)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

_____
_____

How would you like the meal to be improved for next time?

_____
_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Ethical Considerations

Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS) involves three core principles: respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice (Government of Canada, 2015). We have all taken the TCPS 2 tutorial and understand the importance of these core principles to build trust within each other and the GNH community. As we work through the project we will treat the members of GNH and each other fairly, equally, and with respect, while protecting the welfare of everyone.

<u>Budget</u>

GNH lunches are 'Pay-What-You-Can', so we must be conscious of the cost by using harvests produced by the GNH farm and choosing low-cost ingredients. We will aim for $10-$60 per 35 servings depending on the availability of seasonal harvest from the community farm.

Conclusion

We hope that our project will assist GNH in improving the overall quality of their Pay-What-You-Can lunch and increase the awareness of the community members that money is not a significant barrier to create a nutrient rich and satisfying meal; thus, leading to food security.

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