**Societal Impact**

**School of Business and Public Administration**

Mohamad Sepehri, Dean

Dr. Yolandra A. Plummer

Washington, DC 2008

[mohamad.sepehri@udc.edu](mailto:mohamad.sepehri@udc.edu)

[yolandra.plummer@udc.edu](mailto:yolandra.plummer@udc.edu)

1. **Description of the Innovative Program**

The University of the District of Columbia is a public historically black urban-focused land-grant university in the nation’s capital. The University’s mission is to serve the needs of the District of Columbia residents. The university continues to meet the changing needs of the community and produce lifelong learners and transformative leaders in the workforce, government and nonprofit sectors.

The University’s School of Business and Public Administration has taken a leadership role in sustainability and resilience. The School of Business and Public Administration has partnered with the Government of the District of Columbia in an intentional, system-wide and cross-disciplinary way. The University entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Government of the District of Columbia to administer workforce readiness and coaching services to District residents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. The District of Columbia Department of Human Services, Economic Services Administration oversees the MOA. The goal of the MOA is to assist individuals to become self-sufficient.

One of the goals of the School of Business and Public Administration is to recognize, embrace and value ethnic and cultural diversity and welcome and respect individuals of different backgrounds, beliefs and points of view. The School of Business and Public Administration created the Paving Access Trails to Higher Security (PATHS), to serve District residents who receive TANF benefits, in direct response to the MOA. The collaborative project brings together organizations, nonprofits, agencies, schools, government, business and industry and citizens to promote a culture that will lead to individuals becoming self-sufficient.

The PATHS program began in 1998 in direct response to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. The PATHS program currently serves up to 400 individuals. Services include case management coaching, life skills, job search and readiness training, financial literacy training, access to an onsite clothing boutique, transportation farecards, childcare and mental health care referrals, expungement of criminal histories, payment of background checks, laptop distribution, development of peer networks and coordination of care. The program staff is operated by graduates of the School of Business and Public Administration, student interns, SBPA and other University faculty.

**II. Societal Impact of the Program**

Since its inception in 1998, the PATHS program has served a range of 400-1,000 individuals annually. From March 2020 to present, the PATHS program provided 3,000+ online resources for 300 individuals. The PATHS program has established training for career pathways in healthcare. Trainings have included Child Development Associate (CDA), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Home Health Aide (HHA), Hospitality, Microsoft Office, Social Media, Entrepreneurship and Concierge Essentials (Property Management).

The PATHS program introduced the Contact Tracing and Community Health Worker certifications in 2020. The training trained participants on the principles of the contact tracing to reduce the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. In 2021, Digital Literacy training was implemented. The Digital Literacy training offers three certifications.

In 2020, 84% of the participants completed the Hospitality training. 77% of the participants passed a nationally recognized hospitality industry examination.

The PATHS program developed partnerships with nine employer partners in 2019. PATHS and nine other community partners hosted provided toys to 150 families in the District of Columbia in 2019. Below, are a few quick facts about the PATHS program

* Number of individuals served 411
* Females 390
* Males 21
* Number of individuals engaged in training (types of training, if
* possible) GED/High School Diploma 19
* Number of individuals engaged in postsecondary education 33
* Number of individuals engaged in early childhood education 2 GEN 194
* Number of individuals employed 7
* Number of childcare referrals 16
* Number of domestic violence referrals 0
* Number of individuals engaged in financial literacy 12

**III. Description of applicability or transferability to other institutions**

Currently, there is no documented evidence and/or unknown if other Schools of Business programs have unique partnerships to administer work readiness training to the TANF population**.** The program operations can be applied, replicated and/or transferred to other universities and colleges.