

## Yale University President's Public Service Fellowship Summer 2021

### Proposal for Fellow working remotely for organization

- Organization: Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven
  - Full street address of organization: 333 Sherman Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511
  - Website: [www.nhsfnhshaven.org](http://www.nhsfnhshaven.org)
  - Name and title of person who will be the Fellow's direct supervisor: Stephen Cremin-Endes, Director of Community Building & Organizing
  - Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor: 203-562-0598 x222 scremin-endes@nhsfnhshaven.org (203) 444-2303 Cell
  - Placement dates: We are available for all 11 weeks and willing to work with the program for a shorter length of time if need be.
  - Are placement dates flexible? Are you able to accommodate a Fellow working in a different time zone? Yes
  - Proposed 37.5 hour per week work schedule: We have flexibility with Fellow and will require frequent communication via Zoom, Teams and phone. The CB&O Team has a formal weekly staff meeting on Monday morning at 10:00 and quick daily check-ins each day around 10 am. NHS All Staff Meetings occur every other week on Tuesday afternoons from 2 to 3. Open 'office hours' are held on Monday and Friday for one hour from 11:00 to 12:00. **Part of this position** will require interacting remotely with residents in the evening and the weekends.
  - Organization description: NHS' mission is to strengthen neighborhoods by developing affordable housing and increasing homeownership opportunities; providing homebuyer education and financial coaching; making homes safe, beautiful, and energy-efficient; and working to improve perceptions of the neighborhoods in which we are working by helping residents take charge of their communities. NHS of New Haven's comprehensive approach of clustered affordable housing, homeownership education, community organizing, and commitment to sustainability empowers individuals with low and moderate incomes to not only become homeowners, but also vested stakeholders in their community. We have been serving New Haven's neighborhoods for the past 40 years. Our affordable housing development is focused in the Newhallville, Hill, and Dwight neighborhoods of New Haven. Each year we strive to rehabilitate/build up to 10 properties in our targeted neighborhoods, devote substantial community organizing efforts in these locations, and serve as many as 1500 clients looking to purchase a home or prevent a pending foreclosure.
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- **Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting:** The Fellow will work with residents to continue to create a resident story telling initiative based in the Newhallville neighborhood. The Fellow will also support the emerging NHS Data Group and help work toward the creation of a Social Impact Bond.
- Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

Task One: (65% of time)

To continue the story telling initiative started in 2020 by the Yale President Public Service Fellow.

Elijah Hong worked closely with a fellow Yale Intern, Abby Wang, who was employing her Yale Domestic Summer Award. The primary task was to help create Newhallville 99, a photojournalistic project intent on capturing the lives of 99 resident leaders in New Haven's Newhallville neighborhood. Given the nature of the project, we expected prospective interns to share an interest in learning about and connecting with New Haven's Newhallville neighborhood. And as inspired by Brandon Stanton's Humans of New York, the intern's responsibility was to interview the residents over the phone and then to help design a platform optimal for sharing their stories.

The two of them started a storytelling initiative with Devin Avshalom-Smith, a lifelong resident on Starr Street in Newhallville. Elijah worked with three NHS Staff during the summer (Stephen Cremin-Endes, Director of Community Building and Organizing, Adam Rawlings, Community Engagement Specialist, and Tebben Lopez, Communications Specialist), interviewed three other NHS staff, two board members and other supporters of NHS to develop interviewing skills and best practices. They then interviewed seven residents from Newhallville. An average of one interview per week seems to be the best cadence and rhythm given the time availability of Devin and the interviewees, plus the time spent documenting and uploading the recordings. Elijah worked with Abby and an open-source online index tool from the University of Kentucky, which captures keywords and helps to index the hour-long interviews.

We believe resident voices are vital to help further understanding, strengthen social cohesion, and to deepen our commitment to community matters, especially given the deep challenges of race relations in America that were brought to heightened awareness by the Black Lives Matter movement in the summer of 2020.

The challenge for 2021 is to continue to grow this project at a pace and scale that is manageable.

Task Two: (35% of time)

Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven's mission is to strengthen neighborhoods by developing affordable housing and increasing homeownership opportunities; providing homebuyer education and financial coaching; making homes safe, beautiful, and energy-efficient; and working to improve the perceptions of the neighborhoods in which we work by helping residents take charge of their communities.

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Established in 1979, our original mission was to revitalize New Haven's Upper State Street and Dwight/Edgewood neighborhoods by rehabilitating houses for people who needed technical or financial assistance. In 1982, we incorporated a new goal into the mission – to increase homeownership. Shortly thereafter, we began community organizing to help residents take charge of their neighborhoods. During the 1990s when housing values were declining sharply, we increased homebuyer education and counseling programs. These programs helped residents cope with the economic realities in our local housing market. We took on complete “gut” rehabilitations to assure new homebuyers that their new homes would only require routine maintenance. In 2001, recognizing the growing need for comprehensive homebuyer education and counseling, we launched the New Haven HomeOwnership Center (HOC), to serve homebuyers and homeowners. Today, we persist in our efforts to improve New Haven residents' perceptions of the neighborhoods in which we have a presence and to make homeownership a possibility for more people. We have rehabilitated and constructed nearly 300 single- and multi-family properties, creating safe, energy-efficient, affordable housing for more than 500 families and 172 multi-family homeownership opportunities for people with low and moderate incomes. The HOC has helped thousands of clients repair their credit, create sustainable household budgets, and become financially savvy homebuyers. We continue to provide homebuyer and homeowner education, financial counseling, leadership development, community building, and ongoing support to empower New Haven's marginalized residents.

Our CB&O team is working with the Yale School of Management Social Impact Club (SIC) and the Yale School of Public Health Student Consulting Group during the 2020-2021 academic year to address the challenge of working with residents and resident-driven groups to bring the power of social impact investing and social impact bonds (SIBs) to a low/moderate-income community. The SIC team, alongside NHS Staff, Board of Directors, and neighborhood residents, will discuss the challenges that exist, set priorities, understand interdisciplinary and complex interconnections, and propose areas (housing, environment, crime, health) that look promising to create a SIB 'mock' prospectus that can be brought to the market.

Working with Stephen, Adam, Jim (see bios below), resident driven groups, and other community stakeholders, the Yale Fellow will provide important support in the development a Social Impact Bond contract document.

NHS staff member Stephen Cremin-Endes (Director of Community Building and Organizing) will be the primary contact. He will be fully engaged in the development of deliverables noted above, and is fully committed to providing in-depth support throughout the project in terms of design and conceptualization of financial product(s). He will also make introductions to key residents, resident-driven groups, and organizational partners and to participate in meetings as needed.

Adam Rawlings (Project Manager in the Community Building and Organizing Department) will be the primary contact for data provision as well as assist with timely support and insight as questions arise throughout the project.

Jim Paley, Ph.D. (Executive Director) will provide oversight and share 40 years of experience at NHS, knowledge of NeighborWorks America as their longest-serving Executive Director, and specialized knowledge of the field.

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- List specific skills/experience required for this work:

Required:

- Passion for social justice, community development, and environmental stewardship
  - Sincere desire to engage and work with low-income individuals and communities
  - Flexibility, initiative, and creativity
  - Excellent interpersonal, verbal, and writing skills and attention to detail.
- Equipment/resources you will provide to help Fellow conduct work: NHS will provide business email and phone number.
  - Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

In addition to hosting dozens of volunteer events with Yale students each year, NHS has been fortunate enough to host Yale President's Public Service Fellows for more than a decade. A few of the projects with which Fellows have assisted us are as follows:

- 2003: Developed a Business Plan for our organization (and presented it to NHS staff and Board of Directors); helped create an expanded website for our organization
  - 2008: Coordinated our strategic planning process; created the written Strategic Plan that would guide our activities from 2008-2013; researched housing economic trends to update our Business Plan
  - 2010: Worked alongside our Community Organizing team to coordinate neighborhood events and lay the groundwork for future community initiatives
  - 2012: Compiled the organization's Annual Report; surveyed targeted neighborhoods using the Success Measures Survey created by NeighborWorks® America; created a final analysis of survey data
  - 2013: Worked to strengthen NHS' relations with faith-based communities in and around our targeted neighborhoods
  - 2015: Developed a sustainability report that identified NHS' "green" accomplishments of the last year and target outcomes for NHS in 2015-16
  - 2016: Conducted the 2016 Community Impact Measurement Survey, our three-year follow-up to the Success Measures Survey undertaken in 2012; provided social media marketing support for HOC Realty, one of NHS' related organizations
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- 2017: Supported the West River Water Festival and the Newhallville Promise Land Festival, and assisted resident leaders in a clean street/reduced trash initiative of painting four plastic garbage barrels with young residents and teenagers
- 2018: Worked with Elm City Cycling to teach bike safety to youth in Newhallville, helped paint the Women's Empowerment Mural, researched and wrote for our five-year Strategic Planning Document, published a weekly newsletter that summarized recent CB&O activities
- 2019: Completed report on Fighting Blight in Dwight – Protecting Communities and Homes through Historic Preservation
- 2020: worked remotely with residents to create a story telling initiative in the Newhallville neighborhood, performing in-depth interviews with residents, cataloging the interviews online

NHS has a long history of collaborating with young adults, particularly university students, in our community development projects. All Yale President's Public Service Fellows have served our organization extremely well, assisting us in many different domains, including community organizing, written correspondence, and research. Based on the evaluations and comments we have received, each of the students has found the experience of working with NHS to be very worthwhile.

We aim to accommodate the interests of the Yale President's Public Service Fellow by adapting and tailoring work assignments to maximize their value to the student while helping us accomplish our mission of revitalizing New Haven's neighborhoods. In this way, we are able to create a summer program that will not only meet the needs and aspirations of the student, but will also provide a substantive benefit to our organization.

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