



# HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The HCD Fellowship program is funded by the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development and facilitated by the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy (SUAPP) at the University of Memphis. The competitive program places highly qualified graduate students with government and nonprofit agencies and organizations that are leading community development efforts in Memphis. The program seeks to support the work of selected placement agencies while enhancing the education of selected student fellows. Selected students are paired with a placement agency, where they work for 20 hours per week.

## Agency Eligibility

**Placement agencies are selected based on the following criteria:**

- Appropriateness of agency mission
- Demonstrated and potential ability to improve quality of life for Memphis neighborhoods and residents
- Connection to priority areas/neighborhoods of the Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development
- Clarity of the proposed fellowship scope of work and focus

## Student Eligibility

Full-time graduate students in Anthropology, City and Regional Planning, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Public Administration and Social Work are eligible to apply. Students are selected based on their academic and professional promise and their potential to contribute to selected placement agencies.



# HISTORICAL HCD FELLOWSHIP PARTNER AGENCIES

- ▶ Behavioral Health Initiatives
- ▶ Behavioral Health Initiatives
- ▶ Binghamton CDC
- ▶ BLDG Memphis
- ▶ Blight Authority of Memphis, Inc.
- ▶ Center for Transforming Communities
- ▶ City of Memphis Chief Administrator's Office
- ▶ City of Memphis Division of Parks and Neighborhoods
- ▶ City of Memphis Youth Services
- ▶ Clayborn Reborn
- ▶ Clean Memphis
- ▶ Community LIFT
- ▶ Cooper Young CDC
- ▶ Frayser CDC
- ▶ Freeman Outreach Center
- ▶ Gestalt Community Schools
- ▶ Goodwill Homes Community Services, Inc.
- ▶ Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
- ▶ Grow Memphis
- ▶ Habitat for Humanity
- ▶ Hospitality Hub of Memphis
- ▶ Keep Tennessee Beautiful
- ▶ Knowledge Quest
- ▶ Latino Memphis
- ▶ Lead Hazard Control - Shelby County Housing
- ▶ Mayor's Innovation Development Team
- ▶ Memphis Area Legal Services
- ▶ Memphis Center for Independent Living
- ▶ Memphis City Schools
- ▶ Memphis Heritage
- ▶ Memphis Landmarks Commission
- ▶ Memphis and Shelby County Division of Planning and Development
- ▶ Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach
- ▶ Midtown Memphis Development Corporation
- ▶ Neighborhood Preservation, Inc.
- ▶ Pigeon Roost CDC
- ▶ Refugee Empowerment Program
- ▶ Shelby Farms Conservancy
- ▶ Shelby Residential Vocational Services
- ▶ South Memphis Alliance
- ▶ St. Patrick's Community Center
- ▶ Strengthening Communities Initiative
- ▶ The Heights CDC
- ▶ The Works, Inc.
- ▶ Tigers Initiative for Gardens in Urban Settings
- ▶ United Campus Workers
- ▶ United Housing, Inc.
- ▶ United Way
- ▶ University Neighborhoods Development Corporation

# ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP FOCUS

As part of the curriculum, HCD Fellows participate in monthly student summits that highlight a range of topics year to year. This year, students explored the "ABC's of community development in Memphis. The main purpose was to introduce new students (and future practitioners) to the agencies (public, non-profit, and quasi-public) that make up the Community Development landscape in Memphis, so they can understand the roles played by each. (A secondary purpose was to untangle the world of acronyms and jargon that we rely on!)

In the fall, students participated in panel discussions with host agency representatives, who provided insight into how they handle decision making, power structures, fundraising, and partnerships.

In the spring, fellows participated in a series of site visits and on the ground learning experiences, including a working session at Black Seeds Urban Farm.



# HCD FELLOWSHIP PLACEMENT AGENCIES



**INNOVATE MEMPHIS**  
DELIVERING CIVIC SOLUTIONS



# FELLOWSHIP SUMMARIES



## Emma Gilleland

Graduate Program: **Anthropology**  
Placement Agency: **United Housing**

United Housing is a nonprofit affordable housing agency serving families of the Mid-South who are underserved by traditional homeownership industry. They provide services such as education and counseling to residents as well as lending for home repair and mortgage. They have been able to positively affect 1,000s of residents and help them build a foundation for generational wealth.

### Fellowship Focus

Emma, a dual-degree Master of Anthropology and Master of Public Health student, maintained networks with former clients and organized interviews, meetings, and other things. She also assisted with grant writing and record keeping, daily operations, assisting with clients and organizing technological systems. Going forward Emma's fellowship focus will be on the connections between health and housing in Memphis.

*"This fellowship allowed me to critically explore the ways in which non-profit organizations anticipate and respond to community needs, as well as decision making processes and fair housing policy advocacy efforts at local, state, and national levels."*





## Lilly Johnson

Graduate Program: **Anthropology**

Placement Agency: **Community Alliance for the Homeless**

Community Alliance for the Homeless (CAFTH) is a private, non-profit entity that provides planning, technical assistance, and service coordination to public and private agencies working to end homelessness in Memphis and Shelby County. As the Lead Agency in the effort to end homelessness, CAFTH has worked with many community organizations in the Memphis & Shelby County Homeless Consortium to propose the "Strategic Plan to End Homelessness."

### **Fellowship Focus**

Lily spent her fellowship supporting CAFTH's efforts to reinvigorate coalition building post-COVID-19 related interruptions. She successfully coordinated a six-part training series for homeless service providers, reaching over 64 unique organizations and 264 in-person participants. Topics included approaches to engaging in best practices such as Housing First and Diversion. Additionally, Lily collaborated with community experts to host training courses on approaches to trauma informed care, mental health awareness, access to mainstream benefits for clients. The training series concluded with a "State of Memphis Housing" by Memphis Housing Authority representatives.

*"I feel incredibly lucky to have been chosen to participate in the Housing and Community Development Fellowship at Community Alliance for the Homeless (CAFTH). Throughout my fellowship year, I have developed relevant experience in event coordination and coalition building. As a fellow, I have brought new skills in qualitative and quantitative data analysis to the organization, allowing me to create more engaging and relevant programming."*





## Reginah Mako

Graduate Program: **Public and Nonprofit Administration**

Placement Agency: **Knowledge Quest**

Knowledge Quest is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that primarily serves the South Memphis community residing in zip codes 38106 and 38126. Focused on education, economic stability, and community empowerment, Knowledge Quest provides a variety of youth and family stability programs. In 2013, Knowledge Quest established the Green Leaf Learning Farm, a three-acre, USDA-certified organic farm to address food insecurity within South Memphis, which is classified as a highly food-insecure area. Knowledge Quest serves over 400 families and continues to serve and empower the community.

### Fellowship Focus

Reginah conducted a needs assessment to identify organizational gaps and lay the foundation for data collection and strategic planning. At Knowledge Quest, she developed client surveys, conducted in-depth interviews with staff members, interviewed volunteers, and proposed methods for effective data collection. She also assisted in grant writing, event planning, and the joint collaborative Urban Agriculture campaign with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

*"This fellowship broadened my perspective on how public agencies and nonprofit organizations work together to address the community's needs and advocate for policy change across all levels of government."*





## Ronan McBrearty

Graduate Program: **Public and Nonprofit Administration**

Placement Agency: **BLDG Memphis**

BLDG Memphis drives investments in Memphis neighborhoods through building capacity in members, public policy, and civic engagement.

### Fellowship Focus

Ronan assisted in issue-area research projects, organizational strategic planning, and ongoing programming services throughout his time at BLDG Memphis. This included attending and assisting with BLDG's New City Builders program as well as Blue Meridian's More4Memphis project. In addition to this, Ronan also assisted with planning the mission, vision, and values of the new Neighborhood Planning division at BLDG Memphis. Ronan also played a role in the development of multiple grant writing opportunities for BLDG and member organizations alike.

*"This fellowship allowed me to work on key issues that affect everyone from the local level to nationally. It also allowed me to explore a wide array of different career opportunities in and around the public and nonprofit sector."*





## Jasmine McGill

Graduate Program: **Public and Nonprofit Administration**

Placement Agency: **The Heights CDC**

The Heights CDC builds community through just-housing redevelopment and a commitment to serving with and learning from our neighbors. The Heights community has over 1,100 vacant and abandoned properties. The Heights CDC purchases blighted homes and renovates them to a high standard. These rehabbed homes are then rented to families at an affordable rate with the goal of preparing the family for homeownership. They believe that Heights' residents are the experts and by supporting their work we can holistically address the problems of blight, crime, and disinvestment. The Heights CDC works with our neighbors on public spaces like parks, libraries, and our streets and sidewalks, because beautifully designed shared spaces add value to a community.

### Fellowship Focus

Jasmine served as a Highland Heights liaison and representative involved in the development of a five-year community wide plan called Operation Safe Community. She assisted with the intake and reporting of community issues such as crime and blight, issues that are brought to the attention of Police Joint Agencies (PJAs) and public officials.





## Jafrin Mouli

Graduate Program: **City and Regional Planning**

Placement Agency: **Innovate Memphis**

Innovate Memphis works to develop initiatives, nurture partnerships and innovate solutions to move Memphis forward and deliver impactful, sustained change. We work with diverse stakeholders to collaborate across public, private, and non-profit sectors to understand the root causes of long-standing challenges and generate solutions from ideation to scale, deliver, and sustain. They connect the dots between public and private sectors, create tactical strategies and collaborative opportunities, and seek ways to improve communities and neighborhoods throughout the city. Their goal is to create the best results for the people we're serving and to create a vision for dynamic change in Memphis.

### Fellowship Focus

At Innovate Memphis, Jafrin supported the data team to capture substantive pictures of communities, especially using the applications of Geographic Information Science (GIS), and develop effective solutions for community problems. She worked on mapping safe walking routes to several elementary schools of Memphis. She has also worked on preparing a database of all the arts and cultural establishments in Memphis along with characteristics of the neighborhoods in which they are located.

*"Realizing the powerful role that non-profit sector can play in community development was an eye-opening experience for me while working with Innovate Memphis. This inspires me to work more for the community in future."*





## Amanda O'Meara

Graduate Program: **City and Regional Planning**

Placement Agency: **Binghamton Development Corp.**

The Binghamton Development Corporation (BDC) is a non-profit community development corporation that works to improve the quality of life in the Binghamton neighborhood. Since July 2003, the BDC has pursued a strategy to support revitalization of this historic neighborhood through affordable housing, economic development and empowerment programs for those plagued by issues of systemic poverty. The BDC Business Hub's workforce development program provides low barrier, entry level employment opportunities to under and unemployed residents of Memphis in the logistics or circular economy industries. The Business Hub offers residents an individualized program that provides supports to overcome barriers that prevent them from gaining full-time, living wage employment all while getting paid; offering stability that leads to self-sufficiency.

### Fellowship Focus

Amanda focused on research surrounding pedestrian and cycling infrastructure projects – including product development, marketing and survey research for the Broad Ave Tires to Bike Lanes Barrier Pilot. She also conducted a windshield survey of BDC owned properties and used GIS software to create a neighborhood land use map. She also took part in service projects with the BDC, conducted grant writing and reporting, and supported the Hub's various circular economy ventures.

*"This fellowship offered the opportunity to combine my leadership background and passion for community development into applied research with innovative outcomes. I was able to creatively explore research topics, contribute to the capacity of the BDC's mission, and see first-hand the way the BDC pursues intentional community development within the community they serve."*





## Leta Rowan

Graduate Program: **City and Regional Planning**

Placement Agency: **Memphis Medical District Collaborative**

The Memphis Medical District Collaborative (MMDC) is a community development organization working with anchor institutions to strengthen the connections, communities, and campuses in the Memphis Medical District so they are more vibrant, prosperous, and equitable. An effort of this magnitude would not be successful without the collective support, active engagement, and coordinated collaboration of the District's major anchor institutions. The Anchor Institutions collectively represent over 23,000 employees, 8,000 students, 310 acres of property, and have \$2.7 billion in operating budget.

### Fellowship Focus

Leta spent her fellowship supporting the MMDC's anchor programs Live Local & Hire Local, the organization's relocation incentive program and workforce development team. Throughout her time with MMDC, she managed the Live Local & Hire Local applicant streams, redesigned the applicant database, and organized the program's financial trackers. She maintained communication with program stakeholders; collected, organized, and presented program data; and researched potential workforce development and affordable housing initiatives. Additionally, she assisted in event planning efforts by identifying goals and success metrics, assigning stakeholder roles and responsibilities, outlining event budgets and timelines, and assessing potential risks.

*"MMDC's approach to community development is so multifaceted I was able to learn from diverse array of projects from housing to workforce development, to public space activation. Thanks to the experience I have gained from this Fellowship with the support of the amazing MMDC team, I feel prepared to step into a career in public service."*





# Nicholas Wardroup

Graduate Program: **City and Regional Planning**

Placement Agency: **Center for Transforming Communities**

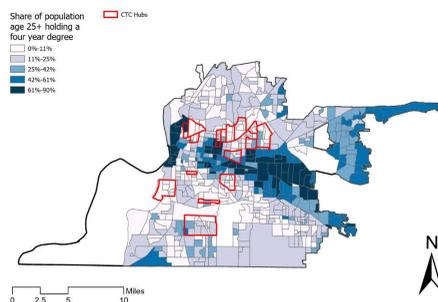
The Center for Transforming Communities (CTC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the holistic transformation of neighborhoods in and around Memphis. CTC cultivates neighborhood democracy through its place-based organizing strategies in which collaborative and interconnected community work groups share knowledge and resources to address neighborhood issues.

## Fellowship Focus

Nicholas assisted CTC in its effort to develop a comprehensive performance management strategy to demonstrate its victories with data. In addition to producing a demographic summary report on the organization’s various organizing regions, he also produced internal documents aimed at aligning data collection practices with broader organizational goals. He also took on a variety of other responsibilities, including researching resident-identified issues and producing an organization-wide grant deliverables schedule.

*“Working with CTC opened my eyes to the complexity of organizing a comprehensive data management strategy for a community organizing organization. Before beginning the fellowship, I didn’t truly appreciate the amount of work that went into communicating victories with data. Now I feel like I have experience answering the kinds of questions that ensure that data can be effectively turned into knowledge.”*

Educational Attainment by Block Group  
2021 5-year ACS Estimate



Prepared by Nicholas Wardroup for CTC, April, 2022.  
Data via TIGER and ACS.





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