

SCRA Community Psychology Practice Council

Community Psychology Practitioner Profiles Project

Danielle M. Carkin, M. A.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Job Title	Head Trainer of Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
Workplace	Center for Family, Work, and The Community- University of Massachusetts-Lowell
Location	North Chelmsford, Massachusetts
Email Address	Danielle_carkin@uml.edu
Website	http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=73936673&trk=tab_pro http://www.uml.edu/centers/CFWC/
Professional Affiliations	Society for Community Research and Action (APA Division 27)

Please describe the work you do, for pay, as a community psychologist, including the setting(s) where you work?

As the head trainer of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), I fulfill a variety of responsibilities that aim to meet the goals of BTOP. BTOP is a grant-based project that works to bridge the digital divide, increase computer literacy skills amongst individuals of all ages and increase local subscriptions to internet. Our program works with low-income individuals including young adults, older adults, senior citizens and youth throughout the Greater Lowell Region. My role as head trainer has me creating curricula for each age group, creating and editing lesson plans, coordinating trainings for each trainer and keeping in touch with participants. Our trainings take place at local organizations including Community Teamwork, Inc, Boys & Girls Club, Amesbury Senior Center, Salisbury Senior Center, Lawrence Senior Center and various Lowell Housing

Authority Residences. The trainings are done in one-on-one fashion, classroom setting or two-on-one fashion.

What training/education do you have in community psychology?

I just finished my first three semesters of my Masters Degree in Community Social Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

Please describe how your training/education contributed to your work as a community psychologist. What do you view as the most important skills you learned in your training as a community psychologist.

My training and education has contributed to my work in a variety of ways. First and foremost, it allowed me to see that I have skills and expertise that are definitely valuable in enhancing the quality of life for different aspects of community life. There have been many skills that I have found to be extremely important as a community psychologist. These skills range from taking the time to actually speak with the populations and individuals you are going to work with, properly assessing the problems and logically looking for solutions, finding the readily available resources within the community, networking and being accepting of diversity as a whole.

What other experiences or training have contributed to or enhanced your ability to work as a community psychologist?

Throughout the last three semesters, I have held between two and four positions at a my a teaching assistant for a course specifically about the community of Lowell, I have been able to enrich my knowledge of the extremely unique and diverse city while also enhancing the minds of the freshmen I encounter. Having lived in the next town over from Lowell, I had thought I knew everything I needed to know about the city but using some of the skills I have learned in my classes, my eyes were opened to much more information and opportunities available in the city. Another position that has allowed me to enhance my skills is the one I hold as a Service Learning, Internship, Practica and Volunteering Liaison between UMass Lowell and Community Teamwork, Inc. This position requires me to network with various faculty members and employees at both locations, as well as determine the needs for both parties and solutions so that the needs of both are met.

Are there other ways you use your community psychology background and training, either unpaid or in paid roles other than your primary work?

I find that my background and training enhance my own everyday life experiences, specifically in the manner of not overanalyzing every situation, being accepting of diversity in any situation and networking with anyone and everyone that I meet. I work to create partnerships with various individuals throughout my immediate and not so immediate communities every chance I get because partnerships are beneficial and instrumental in community change.

What advice might you give to students or people considering community psychology as a career?

Community Psychology is an extremely gratifying and rewarding career. If you are looking for the type of career where you love what you do and you can use your expertise and skills to make positive changes within a community, this is the career for you.

Is there anything else you would like to say about your role as a community psychology practitioner?

Becoming a community psychology practitioner has been the best thing to happen to me. It has shown me that I am capable of making a difference in the lives of the individuals and populations that I work with which is extremely rewarding. I go home from work knowing that I have done something to positively change their lives and that makes me feel great about both myself and what I am doing.