Project EMPOWER
An Interdisciplinary Project

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Project Location
Project EMPOWER

* Meaning of the Project Acronym
  * Enhance
  * Motivate
  * Prosper
  * Overcome
  * Work
  * Energy
  * Respect
Agencies Served
Project Funding and Resources

* $200,000 Grant from The Jessie Ball duPont Foundation
* In-kind Services from The Department of Social Work at Western Kentucky University
* In-kind Services from The Housing Authority of Bowling Green
* Volunteers & Student Interns
* Small Internal and External Grants
Services Offered

- Mental health and case management services for uninsured and underinsured individuals and families
- Evaluation of mental health issues & Development of psycho-social skills

- Types of mental health counseling offered to clients:
  - Individual and family counseling
  - Group counseling
  - Intensive case management

- With the overall goal of assisting in the development of healthy contributing members of society.
* Recruitment
* Screening and Referrals
* Participant Orientation
* Intake for demographics & consent forms
* Intake interviews for assessments
  * Psycho-social evaluations/Screening evaluations/ Inventories
* Interventions (Individual, Family & Group)
* Evaluations/ Exit Interviews
Interdisciplinary Collaboration

* WKU Departments Involved
  * Social Work
  * Nursing
  * Counseling

* Faculty and graduate/undergraduate students from all three departments were involved in providing services to clients

* Faculty from Social Work and Nursing served as members of the Project EMPOWER Advisory Board
Challenges for Project EMPOWER

* Funding
* Language and cultural Barriers
* Stigma of mental illness in community
* Finding adequate space to conduct assessments and therapy
* Time constraints for faculty and student interns
Benefits for Clients

* Access to qualified licensed mental health providers in an underserved area
* Assessments and clinical services provided at no cost
* Expanded mental health services in the community for refugees and victims of domestic violence
* Health and wellness education & training for underserved populations
Benefits for Faculty and Students

* Faculty
  * Interdisciplinary partnerships were formed for future projects
  * Ability to use clinical skills to assist clients and gain hours for maintaining certifications
  * Opportunities for research and publication of findings

* Students-Graduate & Undergraduate
  * Ability to practice new skills under the direction of experienced and licensed clinicians
  * Participation in interdisciplinary case review and supervision
Benefits for WKU & Bowling Green Community

* WKU
  * Interdisciplinary collaboration on scholarship and service
  * Training site for undergraduate and graduate students from three practice disciplines

* Community
  * Referral source for mental health services for underserved populations
  * Strengthened bonds with practice disciplines at the university
The Future

* iSTAR- Interdisciplinary Service, Training, Advocacy and Research

* This project will focus on interdisciplinary training of providers in mental health disciplines and provision of services to vulnerable populations

* Small Grant obtained from The ALIVE Center to work with Paraprofessionals at the HABG and International Center of Kentucky