THE INSTITUTE IN 2014

OUR MISSION AND PROJECTS

The Burruss Institute staff has a wide array of knowledge and expertise. This team of professionals is capable of delivering insightful results from the most challenging research projects. The mission of the Institute is to enhance the ability of government agencies and nonprofit organizations to make informed decisions for the public good by providing relevant data, technical resources, and skill development. During the 2014 calendar year, the Burruss Institute engaged in a variety of projects for clients from different sectors and locations with varying demands and requirements. Though each project presents its own challenges, staff design and tailor research and evaluation efforts that meet client needs and are grounded in sound scientific processes. Staff collaboration ensures that the highest standards are maintained.

A sample of projects completed during 2014 are highlighted in this publication. These project highlights describe the types of assistance the Institute is able to provide to an organization in need of analytical and technical services. The Institute's projects covered a broad range of topic areas including highway safety, drug and alcohol abuse, transportation policy, evaluation of after-school programs, healthcare, farming, and fairness in the legal system. The Institute also conducted local projects specific to Cobb County that included workplace wellness programs, the economic impact of local sporting events, and the needs of organizations serving Cobb County’s most vulnerable citizens.

Our website (www.burruss.kennesaw.edu) contains more detailed information about our staff, the Institute's research capabilities and services, and summary reports from many of our past projects.
TELEPHONE SURVEYS
CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Below are examples of telephone survey projects that utilized random digit dialing and samples of specific populations to connect clients with the community.

☐ DEKALB COUNTY
WASTE MANAGEMENT CITIZEN SURVEY

DeKalb County's new waste collection pilot program was designed to consolidate services and increase efficiency. The new system of collecting waste reduced the number of weekly trash pickups and consolidated waste and recycling collection to the same day. The Burruss Institute surveyed local residents who were included in the pilot program to provide feedback on the success of the program and offer suggestions for future improvements.

☐ ORGANIC FARMING
FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS

Researchers at Fort Valley State University sponsored a study to assess the potential of organic farming among Georgia's fruit and vegetable growers. To accomplish this purpose, the Burruss Institute conducted a telephone survey of fruit and vegetable farmers to measure their familiarity with, and support for, organic farming and the impact of the growing demand for organic goods on farmers in Georgia.

☐ HIGHWAY SAFETY
GOHS SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

Each year, the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) conducts advertising campaigns designed to bring attention to factors that could reduce the incidence of auto accidents on Georgia's roads. The Burruss Institute administered multiple telephone surveys of Georgia drivers to measure the impact of these safety campaigns. Surveys were conducted before and after these advertisement campaigns to measure their impact.
MULTI-MODE SURVEYS

TARGETED POPULATIONS

The examples below consist of projects the Institute completed that incorporated different survey methods to reach the maximum number of participants within a defined population.

MARTA EXPANSION OF SERVICE

To assess the demand for mass-transit services in north Fulton County, MARTA contracted with the Burruss Institute to conduct a telephone survey of residents of north Fulton County and an online survey of employees working within a one mile radius of the Georgia 400 corridor. The surveys addressed current usage of MARTA, levels of support for an expansion of the system to the County line, and potential utilization of an expanded MARTA system.

ACCESS AND FAIRNESS COURT VISITOR SATISFACTION

In the fall of 2014, the Institute conducted a visitor satisfaction survey in county and municipal courthouses across the state of Georgia. The survey was administered on behalf of the Judicial Council of Georgia’s Administrative Office of the Courts. The Institute collected opinions from more than 3,800 courthouse visitors to determine if they were able to attend to their needs in a timely and efficient manner and, for those appearing before a judicial officer, whether or not their cases were handled fairly.

EXPERIENCE OF CARE MANAGED HEALTHCARE STUDY

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid sponsored a multi-state pilot project to test a new survey instrument that evaluates the experiences of participants receiving home healthcare services. The Burruss Institute was contracted to implement the pilot project in Georgia. The Institute conducted a mixed-mode methodology that included both CAPI (computer assisted personal interviews) and telephone interviews with care recipients across the state.
Often, the Burruss Institute is able to offer services to the departments and colleges of Kennesaw State University. It is a privilege to provide these services to the administration and faculty of our home University. Our campus partners need to assess the perspective of KSU students, faculty, and staff in order to make informed policy decisions and meet the changing needs of current and prospective students.

Most campus projects use online survey methods. This technology allows the Institute to gather completed surveys from a large number of student, faculty, or staff participants in a short amount of time and generate results of the study quickly. The Kennesaw State University campus community has grown to one of the largest of Georgia's colleges.

The recent merger of KSU and Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU) has further expanded the University. The Institute's online survey methods will continue to provide faculty and staff with an easy method of conducting surveys as KSU continues to grow.

During 2014, the Burruss Institute completed eight campus projects that measured student, faculty, and staff experiences and perceptions. These projects covered a wide variety of topics and ranged from individual programs to campus-wide efforts. Online survey methods were used for each of these projects, and results were used by department staff and faculty to make program decisions. These projects are listed in the box to the right of this page.
Program Evaluation Provides Necessary Data to Determine How Successfully a Program Meets Its Goals and Objectives

21st Century Community Learning Center
The 21st CCLC program provides opportunities for students to engage in academic enrichment programs during non-school hours. The activities are designed to help students meet state and local standards in core academic subjects. The Institute provides services for 21st CCLC programs in Douglas County Schools, City of Marietta Schools, the Next Level program located in Bibb County, and the Empowered Youth of Columbus program in Muscogee County. The Institute conducts formative and summative evaluations based on the goals set forth by the Georgia Department of Education. Site visits, school record data (attendance, math and reading scores, and CRCT scores), and youth, parent, and teacher surveys are used to measure the outcomes of student participation.

THE COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS
The Council on Alcohol and Drugs (TCAD) has provided alcohol and drug prevention programs since 1969. In 2014, The Institute served as evaluators of the Council’s programs for youth and adults, including the Alcohol Abuse Prevention Initiative (AAPI), the Drugs Don’t Work (DDW) program, Super Stop!, and the Botvin/Life Skills Training (LST) program. AAPI aims to reduce the age of onset of underage drinking in eight communities in the state of Georgia. DDW assists employers with creating safe, drug-free working environments. Employers who participate receive a discount on Workers’ Compensation insurance. The primary objective of Super Stop! is to provide an early intervention program to address youth violence, conflict, and/or substance abuse. LST is a research-validated prevention program that has been shown to reduce the risk of substance abuse by targeting social and psychological factors.

WELLSPRING LIVING
Wellspring Living For Girls provides critical services for domestic minor sex trafficking victims. This organization provides services for young girls and women between the ages of 12 to 25. Secure housing services are available and participants are exposed to programs that include therapy, education, and life skills.

The Burruss Institute worked with Wellspring Living to develop an evaluation plan to assess program impact. This project included designing the evaluation using best practices associated with sensitive populations, and creating forms for program managers to record milestone results as participants progress through the program.
COMMUNITY PROJECTS

COLLECTING DATA IN OUR COMMUNITY
Projects that Engaged the Institute with Our Neighbors

COBB COUNTY
The Burruss Institute and Kennesaw State University are located in Cobb County, Georgia. During 2014, the Institute assisted several Cobb County agencies to find custom solutions to their project needs. The completed projects mark the continued collaboration of the Burruss Institute with organizations in Cobb County. Providing services to community organizations is one of the accomplishments the Institute is proud to deliver.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
The Burruss Institute conducted an updated needs assessment project for the CDBG office that included focus groups, online surveys, and census data. Maps were created using variables associated with poverty to display data at the census tract level. In addition, organizations that received Community Service Block Grant funding were surveyed about their needs to assess where future allocations of resources might be needed to enhance service delivery.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Workplace wellness was an area of concern for the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. In order to assess the need for wellness programs within the workplace, the Cobb Chamber worked with the Burruss Institute to implement an online survey of businesses in the county to determine the extent to which they currently offer wellness programs and, if not, their interest in establishing a workplace wellness program and the types of activities they would be willing to offer.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM
Cobb County is home to some of the most exciting youth and amateur sports in the country. Cobb Travel and Tourism worked with the Burruss Institute to develop a project to determine the economic impact of sporting events on the county. The project included an online survey of event organizers to assess how many teams traveled to Cobb County and the length of time a team stayed to determine the overall economic impact of an event on Cobb’s economy.