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## Eat Walk Sleep Discuss: Building a Multi-Dimensional Participatory Relationship

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**Presenter Information**

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# Eat Walk Sleep Discuss: Building a Multi-Dimensional Participatory Relationship

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A multi-faceted relationship has developed between UMass Worcester and the Worcester Refugee Assistance Project (WRAP).

The relationship has its roots in student engagement, and has grown to include faculty, students and community members in a range of community-based participatory activities, which can be shaped in response to needs as they are identified and defined.

## Student engagement



A PA student, premed student, and group of UMass Med students from several learning communities volunteer at Family Health Night for refugees from Burma, funded through Learn and Serve MLK Semester of Service student award.



A Burma Youth Organization member teaches community adults about accessing oral health resources in Worcester and importance of taking care of our mouths.

Familiarity

Research

Understanding

Eat Walk Sleep



Eat Walk Sleep Healthy Living Curriculum has been adapted from Khmer using community-based participatory research methods with WRAP advisory board and community members, UMMS faculty and students, and Common Pathways.

Exploration

Trust



WRAP member Yaw-Yaw tries a new aerobic exercise at Teen Health Night.



Medical student John Richidei '15 gives a WRAP member a little boost at the Quinsigamond House-sponsored Costume Drive and Halloween Party.



Worcester Refugee Assistance Project (WRAP) provides mentoring and other services to those resettling in Worcester from Burma and Thailand. Started by GSN student Meredith Walsh, WRAP achieved 501c3 status this year and has been building capacity through collaboration and service.

Students from all three schools have developed familiarity with the refugee population through both curricular experiences and learning community service projects, improving their confidence in providing culturally competent clinical care.



Sponsored two student fellowships at WRAP



Co-sponsored training on mental health care for trauma survivors



Funded student liaison to build capacity and expand ability to work with partners

## Community partnerships



Common Pathways is the Community Health Network (CHNA8) for Central MA, a local coalition of public, non-profit, and private sectors working together to build healthier communities through community-based prevention planning and health promotion. They sponsored two summer conversation series designed to strengthen communities and enhance self-efficacy; this work together led to their collaborating on Eat Walk Sleep curricular adaptation project, where they provided crucial assistance with adaptation and the intervention process.



Student learning community sponsored volunteer service for social healthy activity events – ice skating, rock climbing, costume drive and party for Halloween.







Funded research on adaptation of healthy living curriculum originally developed for Cambodian community to meet needs of WRAP members.



# Timeline: How our Relationship has Grown

Haley et al 2011

Spring 2010	Summer 2010	Fall 2010	Winter 2010	Spring 2011	Summer 2011	Fall 2011
<b>Schweitzer Fellowship supports student engagement</b>						
Meredith Walsh (GSN GEP2) begins the <b>Burma Youth Organization (BYO)</b> , a youth development project for refugees from Burma ages 15 to 24. The goal of the program is to help participants gain life skills that will help them with schoolwork, employment, higher education and other paths to successfully navigating American life with their dual identities. As a founding board member of WRAP, she also helps develop advisory committee comprised of refugees. A soccer team is also formed, meeting twice a week, bridging regional differences between refugees and proving plenty of volunteer work driving kids to games.			Nang Maung (GSBS) uses her Schweitzer project to promote self-reliance among refugees from Burma living in Worcester by empowering them with language skills, information and confidence to access services available to them. In addition to teaching literacy and homework help classes to this refugee population, she is working to implement lesson plans and spoken English exercises focused on topics most relevant to survival and adjustment in the United States. She is also working with BYO teenagers to lead future ESL classes.			
<b>Corporation for National and Community Service Learn and Serve UMass grant supports WRAP capacity-building, especially ability to use volunteers from UMass and other schools</b>						
	Meredith Walsh as L&S liaison begins <b>Family Mentoring Program</b> , ESL and tutoring, drivers' education classes, and a weavers' group. Liaisons from several agencies meet regularly; this cross-agency work creates connection, info/resource-sharing between WRAP and African Children's Education Program. <b>Family mentors identify need</b> for education re: healthy foods vs local habits	Learn and Serve MLK Semester of Service Student award: Nang Maung (GSBS), Sarah Tracy (MS2) and Michael Richardson (MS2) work with BYO to plan and host <b>Family Health Night</b> . More than 150 members of the Burmese refugee community come to learn about family planning, nutrition, oral health, fitness and bicycle safety; BYO teens experience leadership and volunteerism firsthand.		Nang Maung as L&S liaison strengthens ESL classes, peer tutoring, and relationship with Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, which now places pharmacy student service learners at WRAP in the fall and PA students in the spring. WRAP programs now include babysitting classes.		
<b>Common Pathways Community Health Network Area supports community connections</b>						
	<b>Summer Community Conversation series:</b> three conversations for professionals re: refugee mental health needs and resources. Leads to formation of <b>working groups on: public awareness, transportation, mental health training</b>				<b>Summer Self-Sufficiency Workshop series</b> teaches refugees to map resources in relation to WRAP center and discusses housing and healthcare systems	
Working group on MH collaborates with Natl Assoc of Social Workers and FHCW to host training for MH professionals on mental health issues for trauma survivors Working group on Community Awareness displays info about local refugees at StART on the Street Festival		Collaboration on <b>Eat Walk Sleep</b> grant: Provided administration and input for EWS adaptation process Co-led EWS pilot sessions/focus groups, transcribed recordings				
<b>UMMS and GSN Curriculum provide opportunities for student engagement and community service</b>						
<i>Multi-cultural Pathways:</i>		Students assigned to mentor WRAP families, joining them for home, school and clinic visits, providing help navigating other systems (housing, education), shared meal				Students mentor WRAP families
<i>Population Health Clerkship:</i>		GSN students Toy Lim and Meredith Walsh began a pilot qualitative study of mental health perspectives among refugees from Burma in Worcester - daily stressors, how they define mental health wellbeing and/or adversity With the results of this study Lim and Walsh aim to inform service providers, clinicians, and agencies to offer more targeted and appropriate services for these vulnerable populations.				UMMS students conduct lit review on refugee mental health programs for local CHC
<i>Quinsigamond House:</i>			Supports MLK Project Family Health Night, helping BYO plan and securing resources to give away bike helmets and toothbrushes	Sponsors Ice Skating Party, introducing refugee community to health physical activity for the winter months		Sponsors Halloween Costume Drive and party, educating refugee families about otherwise confusing local customs
<b>Prevention Research Center encourages deeper exploration of community issues through research</b>						
		Student discovers community need for healthy living curriculum	Student identifies Eat Walk Sleep flipchart used with Cambodian community in CT	Eat Walk Sleep Curricular Adaptation Study funded	Curriculum adapted by working closely with community members	Curriculum piloted with men and women in focus groups- analysis in progress
					Meeting space and meals provided by WRAP members	Meeting space, child care and meals provided by WRAP members