



Investment Connection

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP

Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Investment Connection Proposal

Proposal title	The NorthWest Project (NWP) Blue House Project
Contact	Amy Blansit
Title	Director, The Northwest Project/ Founder, The Drew Lewis Foundation (DLF)
Email address	amyblansit@gmail.com
Phone	417.720.1890
Organization name	Missouri Foundation for Health
Mission statement	The mission of the Drew Lewis Foundation is to build strong and sustainable communities by engaging and connecting families with services, resources, and opportunities. The Drew Lewis Foundation provides continued support to empower families to lift themselves out of poverty and transform their lives and communities.
Overview of organization	<p>The Drew Lewis Foundation was established March 2013 by founders Amy Blansit and her husband, Drew Lewis, as a for-profit entity working toward building awareness and increasing efforts for improvements in health and wellness, healthcare access, and quality nutrition for the prevention of cancer. Blansit Investment Group, LLC, managing members Drew Lewis and Amy Blansit, purchased a blighted property in northwest Springfield that was previously a public elementary school - Fairbanks Elementary - originally built in 1906. In March 2014, Drew Lewis Foundation was granted 501(c) 3 status by the IRS and transferred all programming and agreements, including the Fairbanks land and commercial leases, to the Drew Lewis Foundation, Inc - a not-for-profit organization. With ongoing renovations, the Fairbanks now serves as a community hub and the site of NWP programming.</p> <p>The DLF is governed by an active Board of Directors that meets bimonthly and by detailed organization by laws. Amy Blansit is the founder of the organization and answers to the Board of Directors. A full list of the Board of Directors and bylaws of the organization is also available upon request. DLF currently employees 5 full- or part-time employees.</p>

	In 2015, the DLF was awarded a one million dollar grant over 5 years to implement the Northwest Project. As discussed through the proposal, the NWP is a collaboration between Missouri State University, Drury University, and DLF working to address poverty in northwest Springfield. Through the NWP, families focus on 10 key stability assets including: Job Training/Education; Quality Childcare; Financial Literacy; Resolution of Legal Issues; Accountability; Affordable Housing; Transportation; Parenting Skills; and Tax Related Opportunities. The NWP focuses on creating community access by helping low-income families become more financially stable through professional services and programming.
Website	http://drewlewis.org/
Social media link(s)	http://drewlewis.org/
Location of project/activity	Greene
Geographic Impact	Neighborhood(s)
Support request	Investment/Grant
Requested amount	250000
Proposal narrative	In 2015, DLF was awarded a \$1,000,000 grant over 5 yrs by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to implement the NWP. The goal of the NWP is to pilot strategies to help families overcome poverty and sustain their long-term success. In Dec 2016, a donor committed \$100,000 to improve residential concerns in Grant Beach (what would become the BHP). Two homes have been purchased to date and 2 NWP families have moved into the homes. The families intend to purchase the homes within 2-5 years. The rent is low, but similar to the purchase price, allowing families to continue working on goals, while learning about home ownership. BHP participants also have monthly in-home visits. These visits serve as a tool for assistance, maintenance, and education. Safe and Healthy Home guidelines are a part of this education. The project assists in building assets for NWP families - a significant component in moving out of poverty (or above the poverty line) and towards pathways of self-sufficiency.
Issues addressed	Affordable Housing Community Development Finance Community Facilities/Services Financial Access, Capability and Empowerment Neighborhood Revitalization and Stabilization
Target population/geography	NWP programming is designed to serve families living in Northwest Springfield. The Blue House Project (BHP) is a unique home ownership and affordable housing initiative for qualified participants of the NWP. The BHP is

	<p>beginning in the Grant Beach neighborhood; the neighborhood covers census tracts 6 and 18.</p> <p>The families served are the "working poor" individuals and families with employment, but whose incomes leave them at or below federal poverty lines. Minimal NWP eligibility requirements include and individual who, or household that, (1) is currently employed; (2) has high school diploma/GED certificate or is GED eligible; (3) has stable housing; (4) willing to work towards goals. NWP participants are eligible for the Blue House Project if they are actively involved with the NWP which is defined as: initial Circles® attendance weekly, graduating from the Circles® program, attending Circles® maintenance gatherings, and regular meetings with the social work team.</p>
<p>Population served including income</p>	<p>Community Listen data collected by the City of Springfield flags Grant Beach neighborhood as an area with moderately high violent crimes, extremely low educational attainment, at least 80% of kids on free or reduced lunch rates, and low voter turnout. Statistics from recent US Census ACS 5-Year estimates show that 37.6% of families in census tract 6 and 22.4% in census tract 18 live in poverty compared to 17.3% of all families in Springfield, MO. The service population for the Drew House Project Blue House Project is defined as having income lower than 200% of the Federal Poverty Line and living in the Grant Beach Neighborhood (within 10 blocks of the Drew Lewis Foundation).</p>
<p>Anticipated outcomes/impact</p>	<p>This project seeks to provide a pathway to homeownership for families with intersecting financial and socio-emotional needs, while improving homes and providing support services for families to achieve successful homeownership. The wider goal of the Blue House project is to purchase and rehabilitate 10 homes per year in a 10 block radius of the Drew Lewis Foundation at the Fairbanks (where NWP programming occurs). In conjunction with this request, DLF seeks to (1) acquire 4 homes that will house 1-2 adults and an average of 4 children; (2) repair and address any structural or home hazards; (3) create innovative loan options for low income families to purchase the repaired homes, obtain loans for education and workforce training, and create or fund start up businesses; and (4) provide financial advising and coaching to reduce loan default.</p>
<p>Evaluation methods used to measure success</p>	<p>The overall NWP evaluation model is designed to capture essential service delivery and summative outcomes utilizing an 'empowerment evaluation' model approach. This model determines the potential of programming</p>

	<p>within complex and intersecting social problems, such as poverty. It consists of the following: (1) Participant Related Outcomes; (2) A discussion of stakeholder Recognition and Involvement; (3) A discussion of Community Collaborations and the value of these investments; (4) Improvements that have been made to programming based upon any barriers identified throughout the program implementation process; (5) Community Awareness on program related activities; (6) Organizational Learning/Capacity Building; (7) Community Based Resource Capacity Building; and (8) Recommendations for Expansion Measurements and Recommendations for the potential for transferring the gains achieved to clients in other settings.</p>
Project time frame	<p>Existing Program 1-3 Years</p>
Other significant partners in the proposal	<p>Missouri Foundation for Health Funding https://mffh.org/</p> <p>Community Foundation of the Ozarks Funding http://cfozarks.org/</p>
Audit Report	<p>M:\Dept\ComAff\Investment Connection\DLF_FinancialStatement.pdf</p>
Time/Date Received	<p>4/6/2018 12:46:53 PM</p>