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“A Door to a Good and Happy Life”: Building Social and
Cultural Capital in a College Success Program

Zachary Kronstat

May 1st, 2015

Senior Honors Thesis in Educational Studies and Sociology and
Anthropology

Swarthmore College

Advisors: Lisa Smulyan and Christopher Fraga

Abstract:

This thesis aims to answer the question of how the people involved in a college success program's middle school component understand the work being done at their site. Using data from two and a half months of participant observation, interviews, and materials collection at the site, the author concludes that this program is an intentional community of practice aiming to close the opportunity gap through developing the social and cultural capital of low-income students of color. The author finds that the site understands the development of social and cultural capital to create career choice and a happy life through college success.

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Introduction: What Are These Programs Doing?

The summers after my freshman and sophomore years, intending to get experience in the field of education, I worked as a summer learning coach at Harlem RBI. Harlem RBI is a non-profit youth development organization in New York City that uses the power of teams to help inner city youth recognize their potential and realize their dreams (Harlem RBI, 2015). They use youth baseball teams to help youth become “healthy, educated, and active global citizens who achieve excellence and change the world,” according to a statement of their vision (Harlem RBI, 2015). During my two summers working at this program I co-coached a baseball team of middle school students, assisted them through literacy work, and co-taught them in a teambuilding workshop. Each summer, working about 45 hours per week at the program, drained from each long day, I only had enough time and energy to think about planning my workshops and coaching my team. Following my two summers at Harlem RBI I could still, by rote, say the program mission and remember my baseball coaching and all the in-class activities we participated in, but I was unclear as to what work the program was really doing as in intervention in the lives of inner city youth. What was baseball and teambuilding from elementary school through high school doing for participants?

In this thesis I aim to provide a set of possibilities to answer this question and inform my general interest in what out-of-school programs can and are doing for their participants, many of whom are low-income youth of color. On the forefront of issues in education in the U.S. right now is the opportunity gap, a recognition and consideration that the opportunities that dictate educational attainment are not evenly distributed. Some who study the opportunity gap explain unequal educational attainment by pointing to residential segregation and socioeconomic class. Other authors have studied social and cultural capital, symbolically valuable social resources, as

opportunities that determine educational attainment. As many out-of-school programs are interventions for low-income youth of color, those youth primarily impacted by the opportunity gap, these programs aim to close the gap for their participants.

This thesis explores the work of one Bay Area-based college success program, The Organization for College Success (OCS), and examines the ways in which the members of the summer middle school component of the program—participants, staff, directors, and parents—understand the work that is being done at the site to close the opportunity gap. The program says that it aims to increase the number of students of color in its neighborhood and similar neighborhoods that graduate from 4-year institutions. It uses the middle school component to develop the curiosity, persistence, and resilience (CPR) to develop lifelong learners. I argue that the summer middle school program, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), is an intentional community of practice that aims to provide low-income students of color with the with the social and cultural capital to achieve college success, career choices, and happiness that they otherwise would not access.

Communities of practice are spaces of social learning in which a community of people work together towards a common interest and improve upon this interest through their interactions (Lave and Wenger, 1991). In communities of practice, community members establish connections with one another and share practices, tips, tricks, and information that aid in getting better at the common interest. Although Lave and Wenger (1991) do not use the framework of social and cultural capital to explain what takes place in communities of practice, I argue that within communities of practice participants can develop social and cultural capital. Social capital consists of durable social networks and connections that become a resource for an individual to advance in society (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital consists of symbols like style,

taste, and institutional degrees that individuals can know engage with and invest in to make social decisions (Bourdieu, 1986). My argument relies on the notion that communities of practice are spaces where social and cultural capital can be developed to pursue an interest, in this case college success, career choices, and happiness.

Étienne Wenger (2002) has described communities of practice as having three-components, which I utilize to make my argument. He explains that communities of practice have a domain of interest, or what it is that the members are interested in getting better at; a community, or the networks and relationships that facilitate the getting better at the domain of interest; and practices, which are the tools or experiences used and shared to get better at the domain of interest (Wenger et al., 2003). I found that STEAM's domain of interest is that of helping participants achieve college success, career choices, and future happiness that they otherwise might not get. The program provides participants with the social capital to achieve these goals through the community that features staff and peer social connections. They further promote the domain of interest through practices that include program activities that enhance participant cultural and social capital.

In Chapter 1 of this paper I examine the current literature on the opportunity gap. I look at two major understandings of the origin of the opportunity gap including large, structural understandings and social/cultural capital understandings and how each framework implies a set of responses to close the gap. I also examine how explain communities of practice function and how they can serve as sites for the development of social and cultural.

In Chapter 2 I introduce OCS and STEAM by describing the community it serves and giving a brief introduction to the program itself. I explain that the program serves primarily Latino students and show how the opportunity gap affects these students. I will then explain the

methods I used to study this program including participant observation as a staff member at summer STEAM, interviews, and program documents and student material. I will then explore my position as a researcher and consider some limitations of my study.

In Chapter 3 I present and analyze the data I collected at summer STEAM, showing how the program is doing more than developing lifelong learners through CPR; it is a community of practice that aims to develop the social and cultural capital of participants.

I will then conclude by explaining that the social and cultural capital developed within the program must be mobilized to spaces outside the program like school, college, and work in order to combat the opportunity gap. I propose a longitudinal study of the program that aims to see if participants mobilize the capital and suggest that if not, the program be explicit about the development of capital and the ways in which to use it outside of STEAM and OCS. I then explain that I think out-of-school programs should consider the development and mobilization of social and cultural capital in participants if they wish to combat the opportunity gap.

Chapter 1: The Opportunity Gap in the U.S.

In this chapter I will review the current literature on the opportunity gap as it exists in the United States. I will explore what the gap is, whom it is that the gap affects, some ways different authors understand where the gap came from, and possible solutions to the gap. I understand there to be two major ways of viewing the opportunity gap as far as where it comes from and how to address it. In the first section of this chapter I will explain the perspective that structural inequality creates the gap and must be addressed in order to close the gap. The other major approach to the opportunity gap I will consider is a theoretical understanding of the gap using the framework of social and cultural capital. I will explain Bourdieu's (1986) explanation of social and cultural capital and the ways in which this explains the opportunity gap. I will then explore some of the ways the concepts of social and cultural capital have been used as tools in addressing the opportunity gap. In particular, I will show how out-of-school programs can use communities of practice to help build social and cultural capital that might close the opportunity gap for participants.

The Opportunity Gap

The opportunity gap is a frame with which to view social inequality that focuses on the conditions that create inequality. By contrast to the achievement gap, which looks at the differences in achievement in education, the opportunity gap looks at the issues that dictate this gap in achievement. The shift from looking at the unequal outcomes, the achievement gap, to the factors that determine the achievement gap, is documented in the work of Kevin Welner and Prudence Carter (2013). In their edited volume *Closing the Opportunity Gap* (2013), they shift from viewing American children based on their results and test numbers to looking at the

opportunities that give rise to these data points. They explore the opportunity gap, focusing on the notion that “many children of color are denied crucial resources and opportunities, substantially harming their likelihood of attaining educational and life success” (Carter and Welner, 2013, p. 5). These two authors examine some of the ideological and structural factors at play in the creation and maintenance of the opportunity gap, which include such issues as neoliberalism, residential segregation, concentration of poverty, and socioeconomic status.

Other bodies of literature and authors point specifically to social and cultural capital as resources that determine an individual’s opportunities and later educational achievement and success, within the ideological and structural frames of U.S. society.

Ideological and Structural Views of the Opportunity Gap

Neoliberalism

In order to understand the constraints that exist on the path to equitable educational outcomes, we must recognize that “education is both shaped by and deeply implicated in globalized political, economic, and ideological processes ” (Lipman, 2011, p. 3). When we talk about access and success in college we must remain conscious of the system in which the schooling of our youth takes place. It is not just at the moment of college admission or completion that we see constraint. These issues are written deeply in our political economy. Pauline Lipman (2011) explores the neoliberal system or ideology that influences all of our schooling. Neoliberalism refers to the social ideology that the private sector can more effectively be responsible for social goods and services—that the individual pursuit of financial capital in the private sector can apply to the social sector. Lipman explains neoliberalism as “the social paradigm of the past 30 years...a common sense about how we think about society and our place

in it” (p. 6). Neoliberalism promotes “individual self-interest, unrestricted flows of capital, deep reductions in the cost of labor, and sharp retrenchment of the public sphere” (Lipman, 2011, p. 6). Lipman goes on to explain that this common sense, market ideology “has intensified structural inequality based on race”(p. 13). She presents the fact that the “vast majority [of people of color] bore the brunt of deindustrialization, cuts in social welfare, attacks on unions, and intensified policing”(p. 13). Neoliberalism has affected public education by promoting policies that encourage individual success and use schools as a space to create a future generation invested in capitalism and the power of the market. Lipman states that the agenda “is to bring education...in line with the goals of capital accumulation” and that “U.S. education policy has always juggled tensions between labor market preparation and democratic citizenship, but the neoliberal turn marks a sharp shift to ‘human capital development’ as the primary goal” (p. 14). In short, Lipman directs us to realize education and schooling reflect our economic ideologies and with that there is the notion that the “private sector is more efficient and productive than the public sector” so “neoliberal policy promotes education markets and privatization” (p. 15).

In line with Lipman, Kantor and Lowe (2013) inform us that education is being used as a mechanism to “protect against the risks and uncertainty of the free market” (p. 25). They describe a model whereby schools and education are used to generate solutions to problems that exist outside of the schools and contribute to inequality. There is an understanding that changing policy within the schools can solve societal issues. However, they inform us that these policies (e.g. NCLB) end up vastly neglecting the notion that schools are informed by the society in which they reside, thus supporting Lipman’s (2011) idea that schools operate under the political economy. Funneling resources into schools in order to solve problems outside of schools has

created a way for policy to neglect many of the issues of poverty and inequality. In essence, policies, which draw funds into schools, neglect the issues that already exist outside the schools, such as opportunity inequality. This in turn has “fueled disillusionment with public education itself for its failure to solve problems that are beyond its reach”(Kantor and Lowe, 2013, p. 25). As schools appear incapable of successfully using resources, due to the lack of understanding that schools are structured and implicated by broader societal issues, neoliberalism responds with support for “market-oriented and business-based forms of education and social provision that threaten to deepen inequality rather than reduce it” (Kantor and Lowe, 2013, p. 26).

The North Overton community in which I carried out my research demonstrates how neoliberal educational policy impacts students in this study and contributes to the opportunity gap. One such example is the influx of charter schools into the neighborhood. Charter schools are a part of the neoliberal context as they are generally run privately using public funding and are an example “public goods...appropriated for private profit” (Lipman, 2011, p. 144). The charter school system in North Overton has drawn money out the public school system in the neighborhood. The network in the neighborhood cites in their mission that low neighborhood educational achievement and median income are their reasons for creating and operating the charter schools. The charter school understands here that they can make unregulated educational decisions and changes with the public funding they are receiving, as a solution to the social inequities this neighborhood faces.

Residential Segregation and Socioeconomic Status

Gary Orfield (2013) argues that “educational opportunity is directly and deeply connected with housing. Segregated neighborhoods linked to segregated schools produce

unequal education” (p. 40). He notes, “The segregation of Latino students has increased steadily since the 1960s” (Orfield, 2013, p. 40). Orfield, in a book written with Susan Eaton (1996), *The Growth of Segregation*, explains, “The extremely strong relationship between racial segregation and concentrated poverty in the nation’s schools is a key reason for the educational differences between segregated and integrated schools (Orfield and Eaton, 1996, p. 53). The authors explain that racially segregated neighborhoods, a reality in the United States as a result of racial biases against people of color in the housing market perpetuate unequal opportunities to achieve educational success. Orfield and Eaton (1996) go on to explain that concentrated poverty tends to impact test scores, drop-out rates, college achievements, etc in part as a result of unqualified teachers, limited curricula, few connections to colleges and other characteristics of underserved communities. Orfield and Eaton (1996) go far as to say that “no district has produced equal education on a large scale within segregated African-American or Latino schools. Because of vast differences in resources and parent-education levels...segregated schools must cope with negative peer group effects and the absence of clear paths to success that ...middle-class schools take for granted” (p. 93).

Richard Rothstein explains why we observe lower academic achievement in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods. He looks at “how social class characteristics operate to produce differences in achievement” (Rothstein, 2013, p. 62). Rothstein (2013) states that, “when lower social class characteristics are highly concentrated in particular neighborhoods, achievement is depressed” (p. 62). He explains a variety of socioeconomic factors that challenge normative school achievement, or achievement as we understand it today in our public schools. For example, he cites health issues and their tendency to challenge cognition, vision, school attendance, etc. (Rothstein, 2013, p. 62). There is no getting around the fact that when a child is

put in conditions of poor health, their achievement in school will be depressed. Rothstein (2013) finds this tendency to exist at higher rates in low socioeconomic spaces. Adding to Orfield, (2013), he points to the issue of a lack of affordable housing (Rothstein 2013). Without stable housing at affordable prices, low-income families often need to move houses, putting their children in different schools where they must play catch-up or are too far ahead. Rothstein (2013) also describes some of the key differences in the homes of students from different classes and the ways in which these differences map out in schools. He points to differences in attitudes, experiences and resources which reflect arguments about differences in social and cultural capital, explored below.

North Overton is a community of concentrated poverty and residential segregation. The Overton neighborhood, its bordering community, has a median household income three times that of North Overton. North Overton is close to 85 percent Black and Latino whereas Overton is 8 percent Black and Latino (U.S. Census Bureau).

Ideological and Structural Responses to the Achievement Gap

In “Building Opportunities to Achieve”, Prudence Carter and Kevin Welner (2013) argue that the opportunity gap will close only if we address the broad ideological and structural sources of it, described in the sections above. Carter and Welner urge lawmakers to change their notion of schooling as a game and a competition to succeed. They argue that this is a key ingredient in creating better educational opportunities, as it is a requisite for further changes. Here, Carter and Welner (2013) are implicitly drawing on the neoliberal, privatized approach to schooling.

Some of the other key suggestions they make include policies that create affordable housing and maintain the potential to integrate schools and improve resources for marginalized

peoples (Carter and Welner, 2013, pgs. 220,224). Again, here, they directly propose policies that engage with understandings of what contributes to the opportunity gap, in this case housing segregation and concentration of poverty. They further go on to suggest policies that invest in the native languages that students speak. This would require policy changes as well as bilingual teacher training (Carter and Welner, 2013, pgs. 220,224). They go on to explain the need to “reconceptualize how we define student achievement and success.” (Carter and Welner, 2013, p. 222). They suggest that alongside this change we also push for schools that promote deep appreciation of knowledge and learning, over “banking” models, or forms of educational transmission, reaffirming their interest in opposing neoliberalism in schools (Carter and Welner, 2013, p. 225).

Linda Darling-Hammond (2013) adds to this conversation by promoting progressive funding models that increase investments in both schools and social services in low-income neighborhoods. She pushes for improvements in teacher education and professional development (Linda Darling-Hammond, 2013). Further, she cites the Massachusetts’ Education Reform Act’s increased “funding increments based on the proportions of low-income students and English language learners in a district” (Linda Darling-Hammond, 2013, p. 95). Darling-Hammond understands, here, a need for public access to the resources, or opportunities, of middle class spaces in low-income neighborhoods.

Approaches to understanding and addressing the opportunity gap which look at ideologies and structures are valuable in that they maintain the potential to look at and address issues which affect large groups of people, in quantifiable ways. In the next section, social and cultural capital will add to the conversation a social resource-based way of understanding the opportunity gap and will look at how our societal value systems play out in the opportunity gap.

Social and Cultural Capital Views of the Opportunity Gap

Social and cultural capital theory provides another way of understanding and engaging with the issues brought about by the opportunity gap. These tools for understanding the gap use the notion of capital to mean resources that people can obtain, store, and draw upon.

Opportunities fall under the category of social and cultural resources that can be used to reap educational attainment and life choices. Put in another way, there is a gap in social and cultural resources available to different groups in society. This gap creates unequal opportunities in school and beyond.

The Forms of Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) explores three different forms of capital—economic, social, and cultural. He advances a theory of social reproduction that relies on these forms of capital. For Bourdieu (1986), capital is “accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (p. 241). Capital is the ability to make social decisions and is limited. Not all people have the same capital—some have more than others.

Bourdieu’s economic capital is money—what normally is understood by the term capital. He understands economic capital as we experience the power of money to buy goods and services.

Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (p. 249). According to Bourdieu (1986),

social capital consists of the resources an individual can obtain from the people they know and network with. Bourdieu (1986) understands that social capital is a limited resource and in this way, can be a link to inequality. Those who have connections and large social networks from which to draw resources have social capital. For example, a person looking to start a private school who was previously the head of two other private schools can draw on their network of donors from the previous two schools to help fund the new school. According to Bourdieu (1986), an actor's social capital can be converted to economic capital in a number of ways. A student's connection to an admissions officer at a top institution may grant them admission, their network in college may grant them success, and graduation may land them a lucrative career opportunity. Actors gain capital by converting and using their other forms of capital.

The third form of capital is cultural capital. Bourdieu (1986) describes cultural capital as symbolically valuable symbols. He describes cultural capital in three different forms: embodied—knowledge and values, objectified—material possessions that signify class, and institutionalized—education and degrees (Bourdieu 1986). Cultural capital consists in the embodied state as dispositions, or a way of being in the world—speaking, style, codes of dress, mannerisms, etc. It exists in the objectified state as valuable goods like famous artwork. And it exists in its institutionalized form as academic qualifications. Cultural capital can be converted into the other forms of capital, economic and social, as well.

For Bourdieu, the forms of capital act as a power mechanism. If you have social and cultural capital you can draw upon these resources to get what you want in different social spaces. In this way, Bourdieu understands capital as a way for people from dominant classes to retain control and power (Goldthorpe, 2007). Bourdieu (1986) understands explains that social

classes are reproduced as the investments in these social resources penetrate generation to generation.

Bourdieu's forms of capital provide us with an analytical to explain the opportunity gap in the U.S. Students of color and marginalized students do not have the social and cultural capital that leads to success in school. The U.S. educational system is structured such that social and cultural capital, held by dominant groups, are the primary exchange system used in schools.

Annette Lareau (2003), in *Unequal Childhoods*, shows one of the many ways in which social and cultural capital contributes to the opportunity gap. She studies working-class and middle-class styles of parenting and analyzes the effects this has on inculcating the children with class values that dictate their life outcomes. She discovers two forms of child rearing that are directly associated with family social class. In the working-class she describes "natural growth" which consists of a lack of discourse with children, defining right and wrong without question, and encourages early independence. In the middle-class she describes "concerted cultivation" which features discourse with authority and extensive life activity planning for children, both of which are potential spaces to gain cultural and social capital like participating in youth sports teams, gaining networks and knowledge of the activity. She posits that concerted cultivation, as opposed to natural growth, provides youth with the cultural capital and social capital to activate in future middle-class spaces (Lareau, 2003). In other words, concerted cultivation provides opportunities for middle-class youth in the form of social and cultural capital they may access and use for power.

Lareau (1987) states, "Social class position and class culture become a form of cultural capital in the school setting" (Lareau, 1987, p. 82). She explains that parents from both the middle-class and lower-class want the same educational success for their children but that "social

location leads them to construct different pathways for realizing that success” (Lareau, 1987,p. 82). The working-class parents in her study rely on the teacher to educate the child, due to their lack of cultural and social capital whereas the middle-class parents take a more active role in the educational experience of their children, “supervising, monitoring, and overseeing the educational experience of their children” (Lareau 82). She explains that the schools have standardized taking an active role in a child’s education, making this symbolically valuable, and something that middle-class parents can cash in on using their social and cultural capital. This gives the middle-class youth “educational advantages over working-class children”(Lareau, 1987, 82-83).

Social and Cultural Capital Responses to the Opportunity Gap. Can it be Developed and Mobilized?

While Bourdieu argues that social and cultural capital are class based and that it is unusual for lower socioeconomic people to have capital, others argue that social and cultural capital can and should be developed as an important way of addressing the opportunity gap. Even some of the ideological and structural approaches to closing the opportunity gap, described above, see the concepts of social and cultural capital as pivotal in making change. For example, some ideological and structural responses aim to change the ways of policymakers’ and general population’s thinking about success and attainment. As social and cultural capital are considered symbolically valuable, Carter and Welner (2013) aim to shift the ideology of schools to value more diverse populations, implying a change in the value system that involves social and cultural capital. For example, if Spanish use is deeply and durably valued in schools and by society, it could exist as a form of capital for native speakers. However these forms of change to combat the opportunity gap require a shift in the broad structures that dictate what counts as capital.

Other responses to closing the opportunity gap focus explicitly on aiming to add or produce social capital and social capital in people who do not otherwise have it in the current social structure. This has taken place both at the school level and at the intervention, out-of-school program level.

Goldthorpe (2007), for example, taking a critical approach to Bourdieu's forms of capital, shows instances in the literature of educational mobility across generations by way of capital production from the lower class. Goldthorpe points to Halsey et al. (1980) who explain that educational mobility takes place through the creation of cultural capital. Goldthorpe (2007) quotes Halsey et al. (1980) as saying that schools "were doing far more than 'reproducing' cultural capital; they were creating it, too...They were not merely maintaining 'a cycle of privilege'...they were at least offering an opportunity to acquire cultural capital to those homes that had not secured it in the past" (p. 8). Regarding this study and other literature, Goldthorpe (2007) states that "it has become quite manifest that in modern societies the family is *not* the only locus of either the creation or transmission of cultural capital" (p. 16).

In another example, Delgado-Gaitan (2001) describes the *Comite de Padres Latino/Committee of Latino Parents (COPLA)*, a community-based collective network for Latino parents that focuses on improving the relationship, representation, and success of Latinos in the Carpentaria neighborhood of California. This organization is a space where members may collectively increase their social capital as they expand their social networks, creating a resource to get what they want from schools.

In their study of Luperón High School, Bartlett and García (2011) find that an approach that emphasizes intentional and relevant teaching for Latinos can "foster student's social and cultural capital" (p. 210). These authors isolate two primary mechanisms that foster this capital:

1) relationships with staff and faculty at the school and 2) relationships with other students. The first mechanism, what they call the relationships with institutional agents, fosters a sense of belonging and safety, as well as mentorship roles (Bartlett and García, 2011, p. 202). The second mechanism, peer relationships, increased the connection to school through comfort (Bartlett and García, 2011, p. 198). While these authors find social and cultural capital being fostered within the school they note that the educational attainments of the students still are “constrained by the social and economic conditions” facing them, or the broader structures which remain the same outside the school (Bartlett and García, 2011, p. 210).

Out-of-School Programs

Out-of-school youth programs exist as direct interventions that often explicitly aim to develop students’ social and cultural capital. Although the way in which these organizations do this varies, some successful programs operate as communities of practice in their interventions.

In a study of three organized youth programs, Jarrett et al. (2005) uncover some of the ways in which youth programs develop social capital in their participants. The programs they worked with were a youth activism program, a future farmers program, and an urban arts program. These researchers uncovered the stages of relationships in the communities of these programs, highlighting a transition of program youth from suspicious, to facilitated contact, to meaningful engagement. From this, they were able to explore how these programs bridge what they understand as a youth-adult disconnect. From developing meaningful relationships with non-family adult, program youth were able to gain information, assistance, exposure to adult worlds, and support and encouragement. The authors conceptualized these as four ways for youth to develop the acquaintance networks that are characteristic of social capital.

Sam Intrator and Don Siegel (2014) explore another set of programs that aim to combat the opportunity gap. By studying their own program, Project Coach, along with a number of other youth programs, they examine what constitutes a successful out of school youth program, one which can provide quality educational opportunities for participants and help youth “graduate from high school and enroll in college at rates well beyond...their demographic group” (Intrator and Siegel, 2014, p. 15). The authors describe a number of themes around which they characterize successful youth programs. The authors center their arguments on the fact that programs succeed by developing the mindsets of participants and helping them cultivate the supercognitives that they find necessary for success. While primarily focusing on psychological developments—helping participants get gritty by mastering an activity—Intrator and Siegel (2014) also find the merit in creating communities of practice at programs as well as developing youth’s social and cultural capital.

Aiming to explain how learning is social, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991), advance the notion of a community of practice. A community of practice is a group of people who have a shared interest that is unique to them and who readily interacting in different ways and getting better at whatever this shared interest is. Communities of practice maintain the potential for development of cultural and social capital in the extent and intentionality of the relationships inherent in the community. In more recent years, Wenger (2002) has established three characteristics that are central to a community of practice: 1) a domain, or the collective interests of a community. The domain is the practice or outcome that the community of practice is interested in that make them unique and not just a random grouping of people; 2) a community, or the relationships and communications that facilitate learning. This is the different ways people interact, who the people are, and what networks they develop; and 3) the practice, or the ways of

sharing stories and tips that are part of the interest of the community of practice as well as the community activities—what the community does together (Wenger et al., 2002).

Additionally, Lave and Wenger understand a community of practice to feature participation at multiple levels. They formulate the concept of Legitimate Peripheral Participation, which explains that newcomers enter a community of practice and are understood as legitimate members of the community but take on different roles than full practitioners in the community. Legitimate peripheral participants engage in various tasks to eventually become full practitioners (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Communities of practice, by their nature of encouraging networks, social interactions, and sharing of practices, can contribute to the development of social and cultural capital. The community component of a community of practice encourages individuals to connect to learn from one another and to find what each individual has to offer them—social capital by definition if the community features individuals with resources that are valuable in the dominant culture. The practices involve sharing tips, tools, ways of addressing problems, vernaculars, and styles. This sharing promotes people teaching others the ways to be in order to achieve an interest—cultural capital by definition. For example, a person who learns how baristas dress and talk to one another through participating in a community of baristas might be able to create a network of baristas (social capital) who eventually join them in starting their own café or coffee company (economic capital).

Intrator and Siegel (2014) find that the programs they study are successful because participants develop “an identity as a member of these communities”(p. 59). They understand that programs, acting as communities of practice, can help participants develop social and cultural capital. They provide the example that having participated in the program and listing this

on a college application may tell admissions personnel at colleges who have heard about the program that the students have “resilience, grit, and conscientiousness” (Intrator and Siegel, 2014, 128). While they still engage with the fact that programs develop grit, they also see the merit that the out-of-school programs have in explicitly providing youth with these social affiliations, or social capital.

Intrator and Siegel (2014), working with and studying programs that serve low-income students of color, find that programs can teach the supercognitives and develop social and cultural capital, but must be explicit to students in how to use these tools. They argue that for programs to combat the opportunity gap by helping low-income students of color they must help students transfer the developments outside the program to dominant spaces such as schools and work. Successful programs teach, coach, and have students reflect on what they learn from the programs and how they may go about using these learnings in other social spaces.

The successful programs which Intrator and Siegel (2014) describe seem to benefit from what Ream and Stanton-Salazar (2007) see as the rare way in which social capital develops amongst working-class youth: “It usually requires extraordinary interventions within the household, the school, and the community” (p. 70). These out of school programs, operating as communities of practice, involve extraordinary intervention in that many of them are long-term commitments with large amounts of time dedicated to the programs. The use of the community of practice, in which members participate across multiple levels but rigorously and through different practices, can promote social and cultural capital development in program youth. The programs are afforded the opportunity to bridge the youth-adult disconnect and develop critical non-family adult relationships. According to Intrator and Siegel (2013), this type of social capital

is part of the transformation of the youth in their programs that allow them to navigate other social spaces, such as schools and therefore spaces of higher education.

Chapter 2: A thumbnail sketch of North Overton, OCS, STEAM, and how I researched in these spaces

This study is guided by a number of research questions that have helped me gain a deep understanding of the assumptions and beliefs that guide the practices of OCS and the STEAM program. My main research question was, “How do the people involved at OCS’ STEAM program understand the work that is being done at this site?” By pursuing this question at the STEAM summer program site I hope to weigh in on the effectiveness of this program and other similar programs in their attempts to close the opportunity gap.

In this chapter I will provide the context of my research site, describing the neighborhood in which it takes place and examine the impact the opportunity gap has on Latinos, the majority in the neighborhood and at the program. I will then describe the schools in this neighborhood. Following this I will provide a basic overview of the program.

In the second portion of this chapter I will describe the ways in which I collected data for this project. This will include a description of my participant observation, interviews, and document collection. In the final section of this chapter I will situate myself, the researcher, in this project and explore my position regarding the research. As a program staff member I had both unlimited access to the site but also bring a particular lens to the processes of data collection and analysis. I will explore how I see myself in the study and the implications and potential limitations of my position.

Program and Community Description

OCS is a non-profit, youth organization with the mission to increase the number of students of color from North Overton and similar communities who graduate from four-year colleges and universities. Similar communities is a new term in the program’s official mission

which refers to the fact that the organization anticipates spreading to other locations, perhaps in Southern California, with a similar population of students. This is still part of a long-term plan so for now the organization serves almost exclusively students from North Overton.

North Overton

Situated in the Bay Area of Northern California is a Latino neighborhood, the site of OCS, and this home to the vast majority of the youth it serves. North Overton is currently 65% Latino. Only recently could North Overton be aptly called a Latino neighborhood. The area of North Overton was once home to the Ohlone tribe, and then many years later, early Spanish settlers. The area remained desolate for many years following Spanish takeover until the Gold Rush sparked a revival of the area (Identifying reference, 1993).

The story of the more recent demographic, and demographic changes in the North Overton neighborhood take place around the time that WWII came to a close. During this time an influx of African Americans shaped the demographic of North Overton. This demographic emerged as a result of soldiers returning home and facing racial steering: “Real estate agents... went door to door and convinced residents their property would devalue...if they didn’t sell immediately. Agents responsible for relocating African Americans displaced by redevelopment in San Francisco offered free bus rides to North Overton. This maneuver had the dual purpose of attracting new buyers and alarming potential sellers” (Identifying reference, 1993).

Through 1990 North Overton remained a largely African American community, but the 90s brought in huge demographic shifts. “Between 1990 and 2000, the total population of North Overton increased by 25.8%, nearly double the statewide figure of 13.8% and nearly three times

the county figure of 8.9%. This dramatic growth in population size resulted in major changes within the ethnic distribution in the North Overton community” (Identifying reference, 2003).

The population growth of the 1990s through the early 2000s was in large part due to the large influx of Latinos into North Overton. The Latino population increased “from 8,527 in 1990 to 17,346 in 2002, an increase of 103.42%. As a result of this increase, the Hispanic population represented the single largest ethnic group in North Overton in 2000, outnumbering the previous ethnic majority, the African American population, at a ratio of nearly 3:1” (Identifying reference, 2003). In 2013, the Latino population continues to grow in North Overton, now at 19,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau). New industries, such as tech companies, offering low-wage labor in their environmental services and food preparation departments drew in a large influx of Latinos, many of whom were immigrants seeking job opportunities.

Alongside the changing racial demographics from 1990 to 2000 were a variety of other changes in the makeup of the neighborhood. In the category of citizenship, “The foreign-born population in North Overton increased by 83.3%, from 7,038 to 12,904. In comparison, the native population increased by less than 1%, from 16,413 to 16,546, causing the ratio of native-to foreign-born citizens to drop from 2.3:1 to 1.3:1.” Language patterns also shifted: “In 1990, 12,448 (53.1%) of those age 5 and over spoke only English at home; by 2000, 9,372 (35.2%) spoke only English at home, reflecting an overall drop of 32.8% in the number of people who spoke only English at home” (Identifying reference, 2003).

Identifying reference (2003), points us to the fact that in North Overton there is a higher percentage of young Latinos, 39.6%, than young African-Americans, 28.3% who live below the poverty line (18 and under is the criteria for young). This leads to more young Latinos needing family support than African Americans.

For the Hispanic community, the median household income (\$45,023) was 10.3% greater than the median household income (\$40,806) for the African American community. The African American community had a median family income of \$51,220, 34.4% greater than the median family income for the Hispanic community (US Census Bureau, 2008).

North Overton features some of the only affordable housing in its area, as a result of the new developments in the technology industry driving up housing prices. With larger tech companies in the surrounding areas paying substantial and growing salaries, the cost of housing and the cost of living in the Overton area continue to rise.

Latinos and the Opportunity Gap

U.S. Latinos, the majority population in North Overton and in the OCS program, are amongst the most highly affected by the opportunity gap, with a notably complex set of issues. Gándara and Contreras (2010) explain their definition of Latino in their work, as they recognize some challenges in speaking about a group with racial, ethnic, national diversity. They explain that Mexicans are by far the most populous subgroup of Latinos, making up 64 percent of Latinos in the U.S. Puerto Ricans account for 9 percent, Cubans 3.4 percent, Dominicans 3 percent and Central and South Americans, though “extremely heterogeneous,” account for 5 to 8 percent each (Gándara and Contreras, 2010, p. 7). They explain, “in spite of subgroup differences, the great majority of Latinos in the United States encounter surprisingly similar educational challenges, as well as many of the same limitations on their aspirations for a better future” (Gándara and Contreras, 2010, p. 7).

Gándara and Contreras (2010) capture the extent of this crisis, contextualize the crisis, and consider some possible solutions. They explain that, “Upon entering kindergarten 42% of

Latino children are found in the lowest quartile of performance on reading readiness compared to just 18% of White children. By 4th grade, 16% of Latino students are proficient in reading according to the 2005 NAEP, compared to 41% of White students. A similar pattern is notable at the 8th grade, where only 15% of Latinos are proficient in reading compared to 39% of Whites”(NEA Gádnara and Contreras). They then demonstrate the incredible lack of progress amongst Latinos in the United States regarding educational attainment.

Percentage of 25—29-Year-Olds Having Completed a BA or Higher, by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	1975	1985	1995	2000	2005
White	24	24	29	34	34.1
African American	11	12	15	18	17.5
Latino	9	11	9	10	11.2

Figure 1. Percentage of 25—29-Year-Olds Having Completed a BA or Higher, by Ethnicity (NEA, Gádnara and Contreras).

Gádnara and Contreras (2009) state that Latinos are the most undereducated group in the United States while simultaneously being the largest growing group in the United States. They explain that, “Never before have we been faced with a population group on the verge of becoming the majority in significant portions of the country that is also the lowest performing academically. And never before has the economic structure been less forgiving to the undereducated”(Gádnara and Contreras, 2009, p. 18). Gádnara and Contreras (2009) demonstrate a very grim looking trajectory for Latino educational attainment and subsequent economic

attainment. They extrapolate that if we do not address these issues we will create “a permanent underclass without hope of integrating into the mainstream or realizing their potential to contribute to American society” (13-14).

With Latinos in the U.S. occupying this historically unique intersection of low educational attainment and high population growth, harrowing predictions have surfaced.

Gádnara and Contreras (NEA, 2008) explain:

Almost one in five students across the country is Latino; by 2050 one in three will be. In 2008, about 48% of public school students in California are Latino, about 46% in Texas, about 20% in New York. These students will form the workforce in the immediate future. The Center for Public Policy and Higher Education has projected that if the state of California does not immediately begin preparing more underrepresented students for higher education, by 2020 the state will experience an 11% drop in per capita income, resulting in serious economic hardship for the people of California. Arizona, Texas, and other states with high percentages of Latinos are also projected to see declines in per capita income over the period, although none so steep as California because of its very large and undereducated Latino population. To understand the impact of such a decline in per capita earnings, it is useful to know that the present day economy of California is the result of a 30% increase in per capita income since 1980.

Ream and Stanton-Salazar (2007) note that there is considerable debate as to why Latino students score so much lower than their other student counterparts. They (2007) call upon social capital in their work on the mobility/social capital dynamic. They study transient Mexican American students and conclude that the mobility and lack of a consistent home undermines students’ social networks and takes away their potential to accrue social capital which they could otherwise have activated.

Angela Valenzuela (1999) provides an understanding of the ways in which schools can reduce the opportunities for Mexican-American youth to succeed academically due to white, middle class teachers, prioritizing cultural and social capital in schools. Valenzuela (1999) uses the term subtractive schooling to describe the ways in which schools take away the values and

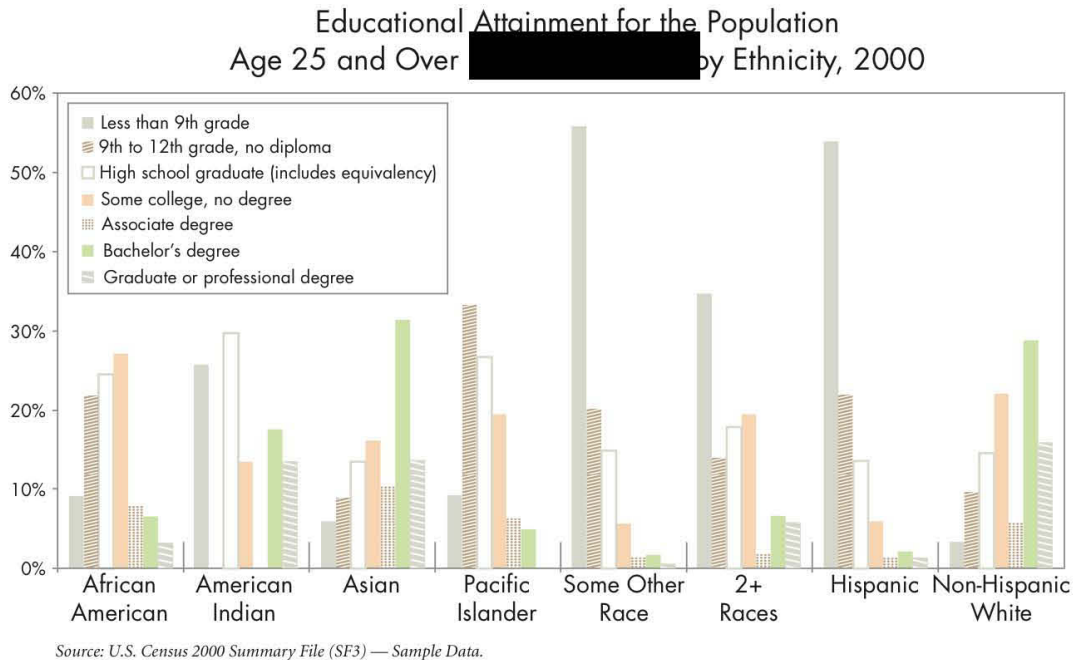
knowledge that low-income Mexican youth bring with them to schools. Subtractive schooling takes away the “definition of education which is...grounded in Mexican culture...educación, a foundational construct that provides instructions on how one should live in the world (Valenzuela, 1999, pgs. 20-21). Further, subtractive schooling uses “assimilations policies and practices that are designed to divest Mexican students of their culture and language”(Valenzuela, 1999, pg. 20). The schools invest in cultural capital by valuing dominant culture symbols, making these symbols profitable in schools, essentially denying Mexican-American students the opportunities to succeed.

Latinos in the United States are a part of the opportunity gap across multiple levels. They are under the constraints of both the ideological/structural contributions to the gap as well as the social and cultural capital contributions to the gap.

Education and Schooling in North Overton

In North Overton there is a striking difference between the educational levels of African-Americans and Latinos. The changing demographic of the neighborhood has changed the overall educational level of the residents of the neighborhood. In 2000, 53.9% (4035) of the Latino population over 25 had less than a 9th grade education as compared to only 9.1% (389) of African-Americans over 25 who had less than a 9th grade education. Further, 17.4% (741) of African-Americans completed a degree higher than a high school diploma as compared to 4.6% of Latinos (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Identifying reference (2003) includes the following chart that shows the distribution of educational levels by race in North Overton.



This chart demonstrates how, in comparison to other racial groups, Latinos (called Hispanics in this case) have a high proportion of members with very little education.

Considering that North Overton has seen a steady increase of Latinos in the neighborhood the fact that this group has lower educational attainment shifts the neighborhood’s overall education level down.

The North Overton neighborhood is served by the City School District from kindergarten through 8th grade. The City School District has 5 k-8 schools, two k-5 schools, one of which is a dual language immersion school for native Spanish speakers, and two 6-8 schools. The school district also offers one charter elementary school that matriculates to a charter middle/high school. The City School District is 79% Latino, 10% African-American, 9% Pacific Islander, 2% other races. The district serves 4,200 students from k-8 (City School District, 2015). 38% of

students in the district score proficiently or higher on the California State English Language Arts tests and 48 % score proficiently or higher on the California State Math tests (City School Education Foundation). The district had an API of 712 in 2012, down two points from 2011, 78 and 76 points shy, respectively, of the California State expected API of 800 (California Department of Education, 2012).

Students from North Overton who remain in the public school system for high school matriculate to one of six different high schools in the Unified High School District that operates high schools in some of the neighborhoods surrounding North Overton. The City School District used to operate its own high school, but it has since been shut down. The Unified High School District currently serves 9,400 students. It is 49% Latino, 3% African-American, 33% White, 5.4% Asian, 2.7% Pacific Islander, and 7% other races. The City School District API grew from 786 to 803 from 2011 to 2012, 14 points shy to 3 above the California standard, respectively (California Department of Education, 2012).

North Overton has, as I mentioned above, a charter elementary that matriculates to a charter middle/high school. These charter schools both operate in North Overton but are run by a national charter school network. Nearly half of the STEAM cohort from this summer attended the charter elementary and will go on to the charter middle/high school. The charter schools serve a population that is 90% Latino, 98% first-generation college students, and 91% qualified for Free and Reduced Price Meals (North Overton Charters, 2015). The charter schools serve a higher concentration of Latino students and low-income students than the public school district.

Students who are zoned for the City School District for k-8 also have an alternative possibility for schooling that is the result of a lawsuit by North Overton parents. Following a 10-year lawsuit, in 1986 a settlement order for a voluntary transfer program was made a law. The

litigation for this decision rested on the fact that the minority students in North Overton were receiving sub par education compared to students in the surrounding neighborhoods. The settlement is the Volunteer Transfer program that allows minority students from the City School District to transfer to 7 other local school districts. Students who receive transfer are considered residents of the neighborhood into which they transfer. (San Mateo County Office of Education). The Volunteer transfer program admits up to 166 students per year. If more than 166 students apply then the program lotteries for acceptance. The STEAM cohort this summer had two Volunteer Transfers in the 6th grade who attend schools in Overton.

Program Description

OCS is a non-profit, out-of-school program that aims to increase the number of students of color from North Overton and similar communities who graduate from 4-year colleges and universities. Two men who ran a for-profit college counseling company founded the organization in 1995. The mission began as the two founders, who were counseling students of color on a case-by-case basis in the Unified School District, began collaborating with the Volunteer Transfer program. The organization developed around the notion of the low percentage of North Overton residents who had completed higher education. It aimed to work with first generation college students of color from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Today, the program serves primarily first generation, Latino students, a population that we have seen to be severely under the constraints of the opportunity gap. The program is funded by a combination of individuals, private corporations, scholarship funds, and the local government. The program is completely free for participants (Educational Policy Institute, 2012).

OCS is a college success program that structures its interventions around getting students into college and through college completion. Until 2012 students would apply to OCS and begin in its programs in 9th grade. Now, with the advent of STEAM in 2013, students apply in 5th grade and begin programming the summer before 6th grade. Students must live in North Overton, maintain a B- or better GPA, and must have a parent or guardian willing to participate in parent programming. The progression of the program is from STEAM, to College Bound, to College Success, each representing a phase of the programming. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) a program for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, focuses on developing the skills needed to be successful, lifelong learners, in particular curiosity, persistence, and resilience (CPR). College Bound is programming for high school students which consists of test preparation, tutoring, planning and counseling, college tours, and career exploration. College Success is mainly help with the transition from high school to college, career advising, counseling, transfer advice, and leadership development. Both STEAM and College Bound feature summer programs and then two, two-hour weekly meetings during the year and field trips.

This study focuses on the STEAM summer component. STEAM summer is a 4 week long program with activities scheduled Monday through Friday for 7 hours. It serves incoming 6th graders, as their entry point to the program, as well as 7th and 8th graders. Thus far, two years into the program, it has had only rising 6th and 7th graders. This upcoming summer will be the first full program with all three grade levels. Each cohort has around 15-20 students. Each cohort of students has a lead teacher and two college-aged interns responsible for them. Judith and Anita, the current STEAM program directors and founders, oversee and manage the operations. The program operates as a set of daily activities and ongoing projects, with weekly field trips.

Some activities included yoga and mindfulness and some of the projects were a video project, a coding project, a theatre project, and a design thinking project.

Data Collection

I collected data for this project using three primary methods. I acted as a participant observer in Summer STEAM, I interviewed participant parents as well as Anita, the executive director of OCS and co-director of STEAM, and I collected program materials. These methods collectively afforded me the opportunity to gain ground-level information about how the people involved in this program see and understand the work they are doing. Gaining this information, I was able to apply theoretical frames and other bodies of literature to help interpret what it is that these methods allowed me to observe.

Participant Observation

I applied to OCS to be a STEAM college summer intern before picking this site to conduct my research. I wanted to continue work I had done at Harlem RBI for the two summers before, mainly spending time leading groups of young people through structured activities. Once I had secured a position at STEAM I spoke to Anita and she agreed that I could take on a dual role by being a college intern and also conducting my thesis research. Through this ten-week period I acted as a participant observer in that I both worked as an intern for the organization, while using field interactions and experiences to collect data. My study looks at how a group of actors understand the work they are doing and becoming an actor in the program myself provided me with an uniquely informed position.

The official job description for the 4-week period in which the program was running included the following:

Responsibilities and Scope of Work:

- The college intern will guide students through all activities.
- The college intern will serve as a small group team leader for 4 to 5 students.
- The college intern will develop curriculum for and teach the principles of Design Thinking, including 4 Design Thinking challenges.
- The college intern will create 3 athletic activities.
- The college intern will help students develop STEAM's core values of curiosity, persistence, and resilience.
- The college intern will supervise students during pick-up and drop-off, lunch, free time, and field trips.

Beyond the 4 weeks of the above responsibilities my time as a college intern consisted of 3.5 weeks of program planning and 2.5 weeks of program follow up. My role at STEAM for the summer extended considerably due to living situation during my work and research. Judith, the co-director who directly hired me for the summer, generously offered to have me stay with her and her family for the summer in order to keep my costs low. I chose to stay with her family, and this decision on both of our parts influenced my work as a participant observer in many ways. I could be present during very important planning decisions and was involved and called upon for my opinions during program planning. The first 2.5 weeks of my internship included working on planning with Judith at her house. Judith drew upon the curriculum from the summer prior but in many cases asked for my opinion as she and I picked the field trips, picked "courses," thought through staff-training, and exchanged ideologies on youth programs. Judith asked for my opinion

on her decisions, often acknowledging my experiences at Harlem RBI, working with youth of a similar age. The third pre-program week was staff training in which I was trained as a staff member, taught about OCS and STEAM, and introduced to the rest of the summer staff and OCS staff.

During the 4-week summer program I met my responsibilities as a college intern and continued to live with Judith and her family, regularly interacting in both spaces. I attended all summer program events including parent and guardian information sessions, project performances and field trips.

Following the 4-week program period we regrouped as a staff at Anita's house for 4, 4-hour debriefing sessions to reflect on the summer and give critical feedback. Some topics we discussed were staff self-reflections, reflections on each student meant to determine their statuses in the program and their continuation, reflection on the activities, and curriculum build-outs. Through my 10 weeks as a participant observer I participated in the aforementioned activities while also reflecting on what I saw and heard at the program. Throughout the days and at the end of each day I would jot down details about activities, notes on student-student interactions, student-staff interactions, staff-staff interactions, etc. I wrote down key statements I heard from anyone in the STEAM program and took notes on my observations of space. Beyond this, I wrote and reflected on many informal conversations I had with parents, staff, and participants. These moments, some at the program, and some in spaces like our staff 4th of July party, were very informative and unique to the participant observer style of research.

Interviews

In order to gain deeper access to the parents and a more direct understanding of the staff's acting in this program I chose to conduct a series of interviews with parents and staff.

I conducted 4 parent interviews. I had the opportunity to arrange these interviews during parent information night. I conducted these interviews in the second half of the program.

My parent interviewee cohort consisted of two Mexican-American 6th grade parents, one male and one female, one female, African-American, 6th grade parent, and one female, Mexican-American, 7th grade parent. During these parent interviews, which lasted about 15 minutes each, and took place directly after programming ended at 3:00 p.m., I inquired about the parents' experiences with the program thus far. This included questions about the application process, admission, and their program ideals. We also spoke about their plans for their children regarding their futures, college success and beyond. These conversations often digressed into conversations about their children towards the end, given that the student's success was our mutual interest.

I conducted one formal staff interview with Anita, OCS' executive director and STEAM's co-director. I asked Anita questions about how she viewed the strengths and weaknesses of the program, her goals for the program, how she understood the mission of the program, and how she understood the community of the program. I conducted my interview with Anita once the program had finished.

Documents

I was given permission from the program directors to view and use a variety of program material in my research. This included students' applications to the program, which featured a

number of short response essay questions. These essay questions provided insight into youth's understandings of college and their future goals. I also used both student and parent dream boards. Dream boards are pieces of construction paper in which students draw their dreams for themselves on one side and their parents' dreams for them on the other side and parents draw their dreams for their children and what their children's dreams are for themselves on the other side. The dream boards allowed me to see a variety of perspectives on college and futures throughout the different spaces of OCS, in this case parents and participants.

Reflection on Methods Decisions and Researcher Positionality

Looking back at my data and thinking through what the process of analyzing it was like there are a number of ways that my methods and collection decisions could have been improved. I felt very limited in the number of interviews I was able to conduct through my research. Having more parent interviews would have allowed me to further solidify my analyses or perhaps challenge them and look in different directions for analysis. I also would have liked to interview parents who typically did not attend meetings as their experiences are, too, a part of the STEAM community and reflect the interests of the program. Further, I only had a formal interview with Anita and I had intended to have one with Judith. Having only informal data to draw on for Judith is a limitation in that my study aimed to explore how the people at OCS understand their intervention and a more formal setting would have let me compare her ideologies when asked directed questions to the practices I experienced.

I found myself wearing a number of "hats" over the summer. I occupied the space of staff member as well as researcher and, at times, found myself more invested in one or the other. This limited the amount of data I was able to collect and keep track of. I also had the responsibility of

being a part of Judith's home for the summer, having duties to attend to, but also receiving the privilege of being taken in by a family. My experiences living with Judith often affected my experiences working with her. I sometimes felt like I was still in Judith's domain at OCS, or that I was still a houseguest at the program. This may have led me to miss some key data from other staff members and community members as I was addressing Judith.

With these limitations, still, I find that in order to see how a community understands the work it is doing, becoming a member of that community is key. While I sometimes became only a staff member and less a researcher, those moments allowed me to reflect on my decisions and to view myself as a community member with a vision for the purpose of the program.

As a staff member, and as a researcher, my presence and my position affected the data I received and my interpretation of it. I think that different groups in the study each had different understandings of me, which affected my study.

To the STEAM participants I was a white, male, from New York, who many thought was Judith's son. Participants and parents, most of whom had interviewed with Judith for the program, may have been conservative in what information they shared with me early on in the program as they could have interpreted my role as having an influence on their status in the program. As I became close to parents and participants it became clear that I was not related to Judith. Many of the students told me that I reminded them of their teachers. I think this reinforced students who have strong relationships with their teachers to tend to talk to me and provide me with information when we chatted informally. For students who do not engage with their teachers in such a way I received less informal data from them. Luckily, I was able to spend a lot of time on the field with the participants playing sports, and I could sometimes develop relationships with students who I could not relate to as much in group work or in class.

Parents whom I was able to interview and the parents with whom I spoke in the morning and at pick-up, also perceived me as a white, male, whom many thought was a young teacher. The parents with whom I did speak asked me for information about college and sometimes for my email. I had a lot of contact with a small group of parents—my interviewees and parents who did drop-off and pickup—which is problematic in that I sought to capture the interests of the whole STEAM community. About halfway through the program I began to use more Spanish with program parents, as my comfort level grew. This increased the range of parents with whom I could communicate comfortably with and helped me secure one of my interviewees.

Other staff members may have perceived me as “experienced with behavioral management, having a funny relationship with Judith, and in good control of the classroom.” During our staff debrief we each told each other our impressions of one another as to help us grow as professionals. Alongside these impressions I found that the other college interns came to me for advice and questions. My few weeks of preparation before the program with Judith put me in a position where I appeared more “in the loop” on program elements and this led to other staff members asking for my approval on decisions. This tended to increase my participation over my observation in my research as I felt like a core decision maker on the ground floor of the program. Still, the college interns and I spent a lot of time outside of the program socializing, going to concerts and to restaurants.

I tried to make my presence as a researcher very small to the point where I was simply a staff member who occasionally conducted interviews and I think I was very effective at that. I tried to keep my work at the program at the forefront of my relationships except when necessary for data collection.

Overall, my sense is that I was able to communicate and gain insight from a large number of students. I feel that I presented myself as young enough in spaces like sports and on the field to be comfortable to talk to. With the parents I feel I got a skewed perspective early on but was able to open up better lines of communication as the summer progressed. With staff I feel that I was a figure to ask questions to early on but later found my ground on the same level as the college interns. Finally, with Judith and Anita, I had a very close, and comfortable relationship, where I was treated as a staff member with prior experience in out-of-school programs whom they could share ideas and talk about ideologies with.

Chapter 3: Beyond CPR, The STEAM Community of Practice

Earlier I explained that communities of practice, as understood by Lave and Wenger (1991), are groups of people engaging in a mutually interesting activity, sharing practices and learning together. In this chapter I will explain how STEAM is an intentional community of practice interested in providing participants a short circuit or proxy to college access and success, social mobility, and career choices that they otherwise would not have had—in the language of communities of practice, helping participants to get better at navigating middle class social systems. STEAM aims to accomplish this goal by developing the social and cultural capital of its participants through the community of practice. In doing so, the program uses this intentional community of practice to provide access to social and cultural capital, aiming to close the opportunity gap for the students in the program.

The program discourse at STEAM—or how the program is described and advertised to participants and parents is through the language of CPR (curiosity, persistence, resilience). The program explains that it aims to develop CPR in participants to promote the lifelong learning attitude that leads to college success. My argument in this chapter is that what is taking place at STEAM extends beyond the development of CPR and is the development of social and cultural capital, tangible resources which can be mobilized and used in social spaces for participants' gains.

In this chapter I will tell the story of the STEAM community of practice through my experiences working at the program as a participant observer as well as through my interviews with staff and parents. I examine STEAM as a community of practice with a domain of interest, a community, and a set of practices. In the process I explore behind the curtain of CPR, the

program's selling point, showing the specific ways in which the program aims to develop social and cultural capital as a response to addressing the opportunity gap.

This chapter will begin with a description of the theoretical underpinnings that inform how social and cultural capital can be developed in communities of practice. Then I will give a description of The Organization for College Success (OCS), the STEAM summer component and its description as a CPR builder, followed by a narrative example of a day working at the program. I aim for these descriptions to give a sense of what STEAM is "on paper," how it is advertised to participants, parents, and the general public, and what a typical day at the program is like. I will then proceed to explain what STEAM looks and feels like in an analysis of STEAM as a community of practice, extending beyond the program description of STEAM as developing CPR. I will analyze the program by describing its domain of interest, community, and practices. In each section I will show how the community of practice aims to develop social and cultural capital that its participants can mobilize.

Capital and Communities of Practice

Communities of practice, as described by Wenger (2002), by their nature exist as spaces in which the development of social and cultural capital can occur. Communities of practice have three components: a domain of interest, a community, and a set of practices through which learning and knowledge are shared. The first component, a domain of interest, is the activity which community members are interested in working together towards and getting better at. The domain of interest in the STEAM program is college success, career choice, and future happiness.

The second characteristic component of a community of practice is community, which is the network of individuals, relationships, and interactions that facilitate the development and learning of the domain of interest. The community component describes how communities of practice use networks of interaction to facilitate learning. Social capital is, as seen earlier, “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu 1986). Communities of practice facilitate durable interactions and networking of people around an interest and in this way promote the development of social capital. Lesser and Prusak (1999) explain that “the community serves as an intra-network clearinghouse by identifying those with relevant knowledge and helping individuals within the community make connections with one another” (p. 5). Communities of practice allow members to identify who knows what about the domain of interest and lets people look for and make connections around what they want to learn. This process is the development of social capital in that people make connections, which serve as resources that can be used to achieve other goals, like college access. Although this theoretical connection is not discussed in the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), others working with youth in communities of practice have noted the value in these communities in promoting the development of social capital (Intrator and Siegel, 2014). The community in the STEAM program is the relationships between participants and staff and between participants and other participants.

The third component of a community of practice is the practice, which is the ways in which the learning and knowledge is shared, or what the community does to promote social learning. In practice too, we, find space for both social and cultural capital development. Wenger (2002) says that community members “develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice”. This requires time and maintenance of valuable cultural symbols, can be obtained through the sharing of stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems. In a community of practice,

practitioners may learn to share a common style or a common dress as they go about improving upon a mutual interest. Lesser and Prusak (1999) add that “because they tend to be organized around a common issue or theme, communities of practice are instrumental in maintaining the shared “vernacular” used by their members” (p.5) Vernacular is a form of cultural capital in that it can be drawn upon or transferred to other forms of capital. For example, a person who learns the ways in which environmental activists speak to one another can create a network for themselves of other activists (social capital) and encourage them to fund a project of theirs through this network (economic capital). At STEAM, the practice is specific program activities, through which students are expected to develop the social and cultural capital that will allow them to access and succeed in college.

The Organization for College Success (OCS)

OCS is a non-profit organization that aims to increase the number of students of color in North Overton and similar neighborhoods who graduate from four-year colleges and universities. The program is currently called a grade 6-grade 16 intervention, meaning that full participants would start in 6th grade and continue through the program until they have finished their undergraduate degrees. The entry point for the program is the middle school summer program (STEAM). Programming for OCS begins in the summer and continues throughout the school year with two, two-hour weekly meetings, one Saturday per month, and field trips. Once students enter high school they start the next phase of their participation in the program, the phase explicitly aimed at college admittance. Programming in this phase focuses more on tutoring, test prep, planning and counseling, college tours, parent development, and career orientation. Once a participant is accepted to college they become part of the next progression, which is the college success component. This is more informal in that the students are enrolled in college during this component but they still receive opportunities for support should they need them in the form of

personal counseling, transfer advice, and leadership development. Throughout participants' years with the program, participants' parents are engaged in their own set of tasks to promote parent involvement, such as meetings, discussions and information sessions. The intention is to promote parents' advocacy for their children through the college process.

STEAM

The community of practice that is the subject of this study is the middle school summer component, the entry point of the program for most members. The middle school program, called STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), is just two years old. The board of managers at OCS created the program when they decided to increase the depth of the program for the students it would serve, as opposed to increasing the number of students served. The board felt that giving a smaller number of youth more time in the program rather than giving a larger number of youth the chance in the program, two things which would cost about the same, would be more beneficial towards reaching the program mission. Judith, a member of the board herself, took on the co-director position of STEAM alongside Anita, the executive director of OCS. The two of them designed the program together and have been the co-directors through the two years of the program thus far.

STEAM is described and advertised as a yearlong program that explicitly aims to promote middle school students' development of curiosity, persistence, and resilience (CPR). CPR is utilized in the middle school component in order to, as the program explains through its publications and website, help students build the foundation it takes to be lifelong learners. The language of CPR relies on the psychological notion of grit advanced by Angela Duckworth (2007). Grit is defined as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Grit entails working

strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (Duckworth et al., 2007, pgs. 1087-1088). Grit is a non-cognitive factor in achievement that Duckworth (2007) argues is the key to why two individuals with equal intelligence succeed at different rates. CPR, like grit, aims to provide individual students with the non-cognitive, “extras” that help students reach their long-term educational goals.

The summer component was a 4-week long program that aims to set up the incoming participants for their time at the organization and to continue working with rising 7th and 8 graders on their CPR. The program operated as a set of activities/courses, taking place on the campus of a local charter high school in two classrooms, that culminated in student produced work and presentations as well as field trips. Each day flowed as a brief morning activity, typically yoga and mindfulness, followed by two 1-hour long activities in the morning, lunch, and then another two 1-hour activities. The 6th graders’ main programming included design thinking, college knowledge, theatre, health and wellness, video project, and a community project. The 7th grade students had design thinking, college knowledge, health and wellness, video, literacy, and computer programming. Day-to-day life at the program felt like a summer recreational camp in that it was based on a schedule of activities of varying natures throughout the day. Further, the participants’ day-to-day activities were separated by grade level, each existing as its own cohort, with a homeroom.

6th Grade Staff and Activities

The 6th grade room consisted of 15 rising 6th graders from a diverse group of elementary schools in the North Overton area and Voluntary Transfers to the Overton area. The head teacher

in the 6th grade room was Kathy, a 29-year-old, white, female, former social studies teacher who attended an East Coast liberal arts college. She is Judith's goddaughter and had no previous affiliation with the program prior to this summer. She was hired two weeks before the start of the program. The two college-level summer staff based in 6th grade were myself and Sam. Sam is a 22-year-old, female, Asian medical school student in D.C. She is a graduate of an elite liberal arts college in California.

The 6th grade summer involved two major projects, the video project and the community project. The video project was a 2.5 weeklong project where students were asked to create a video about what they define as their culture. The community project was the culmination of the design thinking course in which students were asked to envision and prototype, collaboratively, a solution for a problem they found in their community. Design thinking featured preliminary steps in brainstorming where students were encouraged to persist through "getting stumped", engage their "wild ideas" and become "unstuck" when stuck in their thinking. This activity used the language of CPR explicitly in helping students stay on track through their doubts and challenges. College knowledge was delivered by the 7th grade head teacher and took place 5 times throughout the summer. This activity consisted of assessments of the students' knowledge of college and a "college search" project where they focused on one of the colleges that their staff members had gone to. In addition students took one trip each week. The health and wellness curriculum was primarily an hour of kickball or soccer and the occasional extra yoga session.

7th Grade Staff and Activities

The 7th grade room consisted of 19 rising 7th graders, 13 of whom came from a neighborhood charter school. As the organization's first middle school cohort, these 7th graders

had been drawn almost directly from the charter school, as Judith and Anita were looking for a simple recruitment method to initiate the program. The head teacher was Melanie, a 34-year-old Latina woman from North Overton, who attended UCLA and UC Berkeley and is a private college counselor during the year. She is a contractual worker for the organization throughout the year. The other staff members in the room were Koa, a 23-year-old, Asian male, who went to an elite liberal arts college in Southern California and is spending 2 years in India studying Vedanta, and Shania, an Asian female, high school student in Palo Alto who is the daughter of Judith's friend and was hired two weeks before the start of programming. The 7th grade summer project focuses were a theatre project and a coding project. The aim of the theatre project was to put together a small group performance to hone in on public speaking skills. The coding project, which was delivered by an outside coding-for-youth company, was a presentation of the participants' coding work from the summer. The 7th graders had college knowledge with Melanie, focusing on learning about different college options and choices. I refreshed the 7th graders on design thinking by delivering 4 1-hour lessons. The 7th graders' health and wellness activity was karate, a class instructed by Mike, the karate teacher of Judith's children at her tennis club.

Parents

The parents in the STEAM community were responsible for dropping off and signing their children in and out. They were also invited to the children's project presentations and to the parent information night. Parent information night took place at the end of the first week of programming and featured a brief introduction to the program by Anita and Judith, translated into Spanish by Melanie. It also included a Q&A panel with the parents of program alumni,

program alumni, and Anita and Judith. Parents were invited to ask questions, give comments, and then later on were told to envision their dream for their children in a drawing activity on paper. Much of my interactions with parents took place during sign-in and drop-off as a number of parents came early.

STEAM Directors

The STEAM directors and founders were on the premises of the program about half of the time the program was running. Anita, who is a 56-year-old African-American woman with a PhD in French Literature from Stanford, spent most mornings at the site checking in on each room and assisting as needed with group work. Judith, who is a 70-year-old white woman who also has a PhD in Education Policy from Stanford, spent most of the afternoons at the program. She, too, would bounce between the two classrooms and then assist as needed. Anita and Judith were completely in charge of hiring and enrolling participants as well as in designing the curriculum. Anita and Judith began to interview both program participants and their families as well as staff members in the late winter. The program directors reached out to the local schools and hosted information sessions for interested parties. Families also heard about the program by word of mouth. The students completed formal applications, which consisted of their grades, teacher recommendations, short writing samples, and interviews.

A Day in the Life

It's 7:45 AM and I roll out of Judith 's son's bed that I've been using all summer. I quickly head downstairs, grab a coffee, and start up whichever of Judith 's cars is available for the day. She has been out already in the morning exercising so Kathy and I drive to the program

site together. In 30/40 minutes of driving from the hills above Palo Alto into East Palo Alto we're at the program site.

We arrive at the North Overton charter school, which OCS has been renting all summer, as they don't have a permanent space. There are a few program kids and their parents chatting with Melanie and playing soccer on the field.

Kathy stays with Melanie to check the kids in and I run upstairs quickly to set up the room and then head down to play sports with the early-arriving youth.

From 8:30 until 9:00 the other program staff arrive and fill various roles such as attendance, room setup, chat with parents and guardians, and supervise the kids.

At 9:00 (it's looking more like 9:20 today) we round up all of the students and split off into the 6th and 7th grade classrooms, on the second floor of the school. The school has outdoor hallways for the classrooms, which overlooked a central playing field.

In my 6th grade room we start the day by sitting down and practicing mindful breathing for 10 minutes before starting their first section/course of the day. Then we do a few yoga poses. At 10:00 AM I'm ready to deliver my design thinking activity of the day—Design a backpack for your friend! We'll go through the stages with our partners—empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test. We warm up by drawing twenty circles on a piece of paper. We transform each circle into something else—maybe a face, a food item, or anything we can envision. We don't stop or focus on perfection. We are focused on persistence and resilience as we push through this activity. One hour later we now have some funky looking paper and string backpacks to help our friend carry both hot and cold beverages, and a special compartment that can turn regular cheetos into spicy ones.

At about 11:00 AM we transition to literacy. We break up into our respective reading groups, a staff member in each, and spend about 40 minutes reading either together or individually and then have a discussion. Today we are reading *Alex Rider: Stormbreaker*, and we are talking about archetypes of “bad guys” in action books.

Now that it’s 12:00 PM we’ll break for lunch. We have about 45 minutes total to eat, although we should be done eating and play some sports in the last 20 or 25 minutes. We all eat together, staff and youth.

At 12:45 we are back in our respective classes. It’s time for some video project work. We’ve already recorded out at-home parts so today we are working through our story boards, trying to figure out what we’ll voice-over into our presentations. The project is a family culture video where students learn to use video cameras and software while capturing what they consider their families’ culture.

At about 1:45 it’s our opportunity to do health and wellness. It’s called health and wellness, referred to by the kids who have never seen it written as “healthy wellness.” Today we have basketball, soccer or kickball, or dance in the cafeteria. No surprise everyone wants to play kickball. Sam, Kathy, and I play with the kids and Judith watches from the sideline. Kickball is competitive and looked forward to every day, often spoken about during in-class activities.

At 2:45 we head up to the class quickly and then head back down to sign out. By 3:00 about 50% of the parents have come in to sign their kids out and the other half wave from the car and we waved back.

At our fifteen-minute staff debrief on the day we talk about tomorrow’s trip to the Aquarium and how the day went. Sam is concerned about some of the pre-planned groups of student buddies for the trip so we discuss them as a group. We make some adjustments, often

needing to weigh in on how we understand individual students. We're done and I head out with Kathy back up the hill to go prepare dinner at Judith's—taco night!

STEAM, The Community of Practice

In the following section I show the ways in which I have come to look at this program as more than just a program that aims to develop CPR to create lifelong learners. I will show how I understand this program as an intentional community of practice aiming to help participants access college and the types of middle class lives they otherwise might not get. Relying on the theoretical notion that communities of practice maintain the space for cultural and social capital development, I will use the three characteristics of a community of practice to organize my analysis. In each section I will describe the data I have collected and show the ways in which these different aspects of the program aim to help participants develop social and cultural capital.

The Domain of Interest

The domain of interest of a community of practice is what the community of practice is working together to get better at. It is what the community aims to learn and improve upon together.

The formal mission of OCS is to increase the number of students of color in North Overton and similar neighborhoods who graduate from four-year colleges and universities. STEAM is a part of the larger mission of OCS in its intention to provide the CPR necessary to be a successful learner through the long process of middle school to college success. This formal mission is understood and spoken about at STEAM, amongst parents, staff, participants, and directors. The program application for participants asks, "Do you want to go to college? What do

you know about college?” During their first college knowledge session students are asked to craft a dream board: a double-sided drawing with one side that shows participants dreams for themselves and the other side, their parents’ dreams for them. A number of students, likely recognizing that they are in the college knowledge activity, wrote that their dreams are to attend Stanford, UCLA, and USC. However, in all but one instance, the opposing sides of these dream boards, the parents of participants’ sides, show job goals such as doctor or lawyer, or the goal of “happiness.” The domain of interest of the community of practice of STEAM extends beyond developing the CPR, or grit, that helps students attain college access. I have found that behind the curtain of the articulated goals, there is a domain of interest that is success defined by achieving a college degree with expectation that participants will then have career choices and paths to make them happy. The community of practice provided by STEAM allows participants to challenge the outcome determined by the current gap in opportunity experienced by most of these families and their children.

Hector, a Mexican-American immigrant and father of a 6th grade boy, said in an interview with me, “We’re really concerned with our kids’ education especially you know this area that we live in, we heard things that schools here don’t graduate quite a lot of kids.” Hector has an understanding that OCS and STEAM, as a program, will help his son, Geraldo, graduate from high school and get through college. Still, Hector explained that what he wants for his son is more than just completing college. Hector said, “I emphasize to him and my daughter every day that there’s no way out and they have to go to college because I don’t want to see him go through the experience that we are going through, it’s kind of tough.” The experience that Hector described is his personal experience with the types of job opportunities he has found without higher education. Christina, also a Mexican-American immigrant and the mother of a 7th grade

boy understands that OCS is a program to help get her son Dom into college. But beyond this, she recognizes that his path to college through OCS will do more than just get him a degree. She said in an interview that Dom can “do something just to survive or he can study hard after high school for 6 or 7 years and he can get something that he likes, something that he enjoys and gives him a better life.” Engaging with the notion that OCS continues with a student through college, she pointed out that Dom could stick with OCS and have choices in life, or work a job for mere survival.

The parents extend their notion of having their children in a program like STEAM beyond the mission’s discourse to a domain of interest that includes high status jobs and happiness. Dina, an African-American woman who has a bachelor’s degree herself and is the mother of a 6th grade boy said, “I didn’t do a masters or anything like that. Of course I would love them to go as high as they can. I would like them to go higher than me of course, get a masters, get a PhD, whatever. Lawyer, doctor, but, of course, whatever makes them happy and you know they can support themselves.” Dina wants her sons not only to graduate from college but also to push further than that with their education. Above all, she explains that she wants her children to be happy and able to support themselves.

This core domain of interest of the community is reiterated by each of the parents I had the chance to speak with and was also reflected in parent group sessions held during the weeks of the program. During the parent information session in week 1 of the program, Melanie, the 7th grade lead teacher and college knowledge instructor told each parent to create a dream board. The dream boards were a set of drawings or phrases on two sides of pieces of paper, one side which reflected the parents dreams for their children and the other side what they believed their children’s dreams were. The parent information session was, for some parents, the first time they

attended an organized OCS event. The intention of these dream boards was to introduce parents to the possibilities that OCS and STEAM can create for their children. Information from the dream boards seemed to indicate parental interest in having their child in the program. Juan, a first generation Mexican-American and father and uncle to two 6th graders wrote in his dream board in that he wants his daughter to be “happy. I just wrote a big smile face and happy. I don’t want anything specific. Just whatever makes them happy. Of course with a degree you can find that.” This notion that participant happiness is the ultimate goal, as long as it is with a college degree, means that there is a specific type of happiness that parents want for their children. That type of happiness is the happiness that Christina alluded to—being able to pick an enjoyable career that creates a better life than would be possible without a college degree. Hector told me in an interview that he does not care what his son’s career choice is. According to Hector, Geraldo “can choose what he wants to choose. Whatever makes him happy as long as you go and get a degree in something.” Getting a degree, to the parents of the program youth is the domain of interest because getting a degree is linked to happiness and career choice.

The youth applications to the program provide insight into how the students conceptualize what they are doing in STEAM and at OCS. The application essays that prospective participants complete are opportunities for them to demonstrate that they are invested in college success, aligning with the mission of the organization. The application, written by Judith and Anita, features the essay question, “Do you want to go to college after high school? Write everything you know about college.” Every application of the program participants said that they wanted to go to college. About half of the students responded that college can assure one a better career. One participant included that college can help a person to start their own company. Naya, a 7th grade Latina wrote, “I would want to go to college because

it helps you get a dream job. You would learn many things when you are in college, although you would always have a lot of homework. I think college is really just a door to a good and happy life.” Naya exemplifies OCS’ domain of interest from the perspective of participants and their parents. College success, the explicit discourse of the program as a whole, is a stand in for access to a good and happy life.

Anita, the executive director of OCS and director of STEAM, explained how she understands the domain of interest of the program. “I think for us it’d be, are they engaged in the profession they set for themselves. And some are, and some aren’t. So I think, are they doing the career they want for themselves?” Responding to a conversation about the overall goals of OCS, Anita explains that beyond the college success component that the mission explicitly states, OCS is in the business of preparing students for engaging careers that they choose for themselves.

Parents, students and OCS staff explain that the domain of interest of OCS is more than college access. All three groups perceive OCS, in particular the STEAM component in which they are involved, to provide access to college which will lead to career choice, a better life, and happiness.

The Community

The community, in a community of practice, refers to the relationships and networks that help community members work towards achieving the domain of interest. I argue that the STEAM community creates a set of connections and relationships that use the development of participant social capital to facilitate achieving the domain of interest.

STEAM promotes and facilitates connections and networking between students and middle class actors that would otherwise not exist. In doing so, STEAM creates a space for

participants to gain social capital from these new networks that students may use as resources in their futures.

The staff hiring process provides a key example of the forms of social capital that are made available by the creation of the community. Needing to fill one more staff spot, Judith took a look back through some of the applications. She found one, Xavier, who was a current senior at a state college in the Bay Area. He is an African-American male who grew up in the foster-care system. Xavier set up an interview with Judith that would take place at OCS. When he arrived at the site, 20 minutes late, he apologized, explaining that to Judith that it had taken him over 2 hours on public transportation to span the 15 miles he lives from the site. Xavier did not get the job at STEAM, and when I spoke to Judith about this she explained that he was not the appropriate fit for the program. She explained that he was a very motivational person but was not what they were looking for. I argue that Judith did not see Xavier as a connection for the youth to make that would provide them with any social capital or resources. Xavier would merely represent the same lack of social capital that the participants have coming in to the program. Judith hired Shania instead who goes to Overton High, the school where the Volunteer Transfer students will go in the future. Shania was an important hire in that she can connect the Volunteer Transfer students to her network at Overton High and also show them the ways of being successful in the school—the social and cultural capital it takes to succeed at Overton.

In addition, I have recently been in close contact with Judith as she works through hiring summer staff for 2015. She has asked me to reach out to my fellow Swarthmore classmates, indicating her continued interest in 1) students who attend and will graduate from elite, liberal arts colleges and 2) students who are willing to travel across the country for a summer internship and have the means to do so. Judith aims to make create a community of connections for

program participants that will provide them with benefits. I still keep in touch with a handful of students from the program via email and I have become an adult connection for them. I have made myself available for any question regarding life and the college process. For these students, their connection to me is social capital that they can choose to draw on to succeed in school. Beyond that, Judith's hiring will provide participants with access to staff that have "broad horizons" in the sense that they travel for summer internships and have a variety of work experiences. Each has a language with which to speak about their extracurriculars and interests. Participants can mobilize the cultural capital of these staff members when they go about their college applications, knowing how to speak about "going beyond their doorsteps."

Through the promotion of curated, or carefully constructed adult-youth connections, the promotion of some connections and denial of other connections, STEAM creates a community within which participants can develop their social capital. Anita explained to me the thoughtful process that recently went into the hiring of the new development director at OCS. Anita hired a man who went to an elite private university and travelled from Texas to California for the job as opposed to an OCS alumna who went to a local college. She said, "The reason I liked Luis [Development Director], well there were tons, but here's a kid who grew up in El Paso, went to Notre Dame, and then moved out to Cali. He'll have a different story than Jo, who grew up here, went to a local college, and is now back working in the neighborhood." Luis will, indeed, have a different story than Jo, but additionally he will be a connection for the participants to another top college and further, he will be a connection to a set of instructions or guidelines, a model about how to be open and mobile in college and career choices. Students can mobilize the social capital developed in their connections to Luis through asking him questions about Notre Dame, the Midwest, elite colleges, and what it takes to craft a great college application, for some examples.

The current mayor of North Overton is an OCS alumna and a resource that Judith and Anita readily drew upon for the youth. Mayor Carmen was brought in as an interviewee for the 6th grade students' community project. They asked her what problems she saw as a community leader that needed fixing in the community. Carmen was of assistance in this project but importantly at the end of her time working with the students Judith told the STEAM 6th graders that if they liked hearing about what Carmen did as Mayor she could connect them and create a high school internship for students. Mayor Carmen was added to the community of practice to be a potential resource, part of the network within the community on which students could draw. An internship for these students would mobilizing social capital that would allow participants to add diverse and rich experiences to their college applications.

While cultivating this intentional community, developing the social capital that will help students succeed in college and have access to career choices and happiness, the directors acknowledge that there are other communities in which participants exist. Ronaldo, a 7th grade boy, was on the fringes during his first summer, having been threatened with dismissal from OCS. Judith told me that Ronaldo lived part-time with his uncle who was a local gang leader. She told me that Ronaldo had two different ways he could act in the program. One, she described with negative behaviors deriving from his relationship with his uncle and the second, in which he is engaged and focused, by his staying with his mom. Judith said that she had a number of conversations with Ronaldo where she acknowledged the fact that he spends time with his uncle but that that time is separate from the time he spends at OCS. Ronaldo's uncle is an example of someone who is not included in the STEAM community in that the directors actively devalue his relationship with Ronaldo as it pertains to his development in STEAM. He is a counter example to a connection that provides social capital.

STEAM also works to develop community among the peer participants in the program. OCS operates using cohorts of students in that the incoming 6th graders from this past summer will advance through the program together until grade 16, or college graduation. This notion was reiterated when behavior issues occurred during the summer between participants. Judith and Anita reminded participants that these would be their peers and friends for another 10 years and possibly more so it's important to get along. Each student in a given cohort, as long as they remain in the program, will have the opportunity to draw on each other's resources. North Overton students enroll and attend a variety of school in different locations, affording their cohort a diversity of resources. The peer network that arises from participants readily interacting and participating in the same activities will mean that they may rely on each other's successes and choices. This can take place in the short term in that students may guide each other through their successes that they develop at their respective schools or through navigating internships. Students can share how they successfully passed a class, or who to email at a company for an internship connection. But, it can also take place down the road in the long term. Geraldo wants to go to UCLA and become a medical doctor. Dom wants to go to Stanford and become a doctor as well. They may work together and help one another with medical school applications or study for the MCAT together.

Beyond drawing directly on each other for social resources, OCS cultivates informal groups in the STEAM cohorts (Willis, 1977). Informal groups, according to Willis (1977), are groups that can craft their own cultural meanings and symbols that differ from the meanings in the formal spaces the groups encounter. In this case, STEAM participants develop a "STEAM culture" together where they reinforce and reaffirm their choices to pursue college success, career choice, and happiness. This informal group exists in opposition to the formal space many

of these students encounter—schools with failing test scores where students are not regularly told they will succeed through college. The STEAM informal groups are spaces in which these students come together as peers to reassure one another of their successes toward the domain of interest. The 7th grade cohort worked together on a college scavenger hunt where they searched the program campus for the names of elite colleges. Once a group found a name they sat down, researched the college, including admissions processes, different programs at the schools, and other important info. Students were awarded points based on their group successes. OCS turned seeking information about elite colleges into a group activity where students were rewarded for researching top colleges. In this case, OCS promoted an activity toward the cultivation of the STEAM informal group that works together toward the domain of interest

The parents of participants seem to be mindful of the development of social capital by way of the STEAM community of practice. Juan said that he is “creating a village as they say...to surround her [his daughter] with people who are going push her.” Hector adds, regarding his son, that if “he’s around people that talk about college you know he’ll get something positive out of it.” Both Hector and Juan demonstrate their understanding of the importance of connections to people who understand the domain of interest and how it works.

STEAM builds its community through hiring particular staff and structuring in peer networking for participants. OCS hires staff that will be capital-building agents for youth and provides space for youth to communicate with one another in the short term with the hope of assuring long term, beneficial, networks with one another.

The Practices

The practices of a community of practice are the stories, tips, tricks, and ways of being in the community that facilitate development toward the domain of interest. The practices of STEAM and OCS take the form of program activities that encourage the development of cultural and social capital that will help community members learn how to access college, successful careers, and happiness.

One example of the use of programming practices to contribute to students' cultural capital was the structuring of the health and wellness program at STEAM. Most of the kids in the program had played a lot of pick-up soccer and basketball in their neighborhood before coming to STEAM and OCS. However, at STEAM, these sports became health and wellness class, a "sports league" in the sense of consistent teams and championships. Most of the students had never encountered this form of organization around physical play. Sports, at the program, become more than just play and become a mechanism for developing cultural capital. Health and wellness was meant to encourage respectful, structured, physical activity. This is the form of play that is valuable to coaches in schools when picking athletes and the type of play that gets college coaches to recruit student-athletes. The most athletic person who fouls out of their soccer game for roughhousing will not get the scholarship over a slightly less talented athlete who plays all 90 minutes and talks to the recruiter about the game afterwards. Health and wellness, during our staff debriefs, was amongst the most contentious subjects. The college-age staff members in 6th grade, responding to the kids' desires to play more pick up sports, took a hiatus from the kickball league to play pick up basketball and soccer. We were told during a debrief to restore the league and that health and wellness was an activity meant to be structured, organized, and

monitored in the same way any other activity was meant to be. The name health and wellness, itself, was a choice to add legitimacy to this as a structured activity, as opposed to sports or free play, which indicates a level of freedom and natural play, which is less valuable. Students who mobilize the forms of cultural capital associated with this structured play may join teams at their schools, listen to coaches, and follow their rules. This improves their relationships with the school as well as provides them with valuable extracurriculars for their college applications.

The 7th graders had an equally structured health and wellness program in their karate class, taught by a friend of Judith's. Mike, the instructor, attended one of our debriefs and told us that we needed to encourage more respect and focus in the youth when they are in karate. Again, not many of the kids had encountered a space of physical movement that required such order. However, mastering this way of being around physical movement can assure future returns when writing about karate for a college essay or competing at the high school level, an extracurricular that is beneficial for college acceptances. Beyond being just an extracurricular, karate in this formal setting promotes a disposition that is socially valuable. Students are encouraged to learn to focus, to control their emotions, and to respect authority. These attributes can be mobilized as cultural capital in that they contribute to normative school success.

Prior to health and wellness on many days I would instruct the 6th graders in Design Thinking while the 7th graders were in their coding course. The Design Thinking course is an adaptation of a technical design paradigm that is typically used in the tech world to creatively, empathetically, and rationally solve problems. I was given a skeleton of a curriculum from Judith and in this I was told to begin each day with an activity that promoted CPR. Design thinking was said to directly encourage CPR, as it is a paradigm that promotes striving through problems, and getting “unstuck” by being persistent. This course is being established as a 6th grade STEAM

staple and a way to encourage students to become introduced to a design framework early on. While the program was explicitly rationalized using the framework of CPR I found that this program promoted a tech/start-up vernacular that if participants become well versed in, can be mobilized as social and cultural capital. Readily practicing using the terms “empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test,” students become prepared to speak about scientific design and process. This vernacular provides students with access to a world that might not otherwise be available to them—access to internships and opportunities in the tech world that is one of the primary industries in their immediate surroundings.

The 7th grade students this summer had a coding academy come to the program to introduce them to computer programming. A colleague of Judith’s husband founded the coding academy and directs the program. Anita points directly to the initial returns that students get from coding. She values the coding academy in that students have fun and also have an activity that gives them immediate gratitude (making a dot move or a ball bounce on the computer) in a path, the journey to and through college, that she sees as long and not always immediately rewarding. However, the coding course also leaves the 7th graders with a physical, printout of their work, which they can put in their portfolios to apply to private high schools if they wish. The coding course project materials become pieces of objectified cultural capital that can be used for applications to high school, and college later on. The 7th graders, too, become versed in a technical vernacular, which can be useful to them, as they become members, maybe even founders, of computer clubs at their schools, or gain internships—furthering their extracurriculars for college applications.

The 7th grade students were also taken on a follow-up trip to Google where they were invited to envision one specific possibility for their futures. Their trip at Google consisted of

meeting an intern who described some of the work that takes place at Google and then talking about a few interesting topics in Computer Science to the students. When deciding on a trip for the 6th graders to coincide with the 7th grade trip the staff decided the students should meet a doctor at Stanford Hospital, bringing Sara on the 6th grade trip to aid in talking about medical school and being a doctor. OCS has placed high school students in internships at both Google and Stanford Hospital. The students on these trips now have the opportunity to consider Google or Stanford Hospital in the future for high school internships. Further, they can, within their informal groups, learn to value a place like Google or Stanford Hospital and continue their collective interest as they progress to high school and college.

As OCS high school seniors put together their college applications, the community of practice of OCS provides participants with support and advice in compiling their application folders. However, OCS provides participants with an additional, critical, tool for their folders that they use to mobilize their social capital—reference letters from PhDs who have known them for upwards of 10 years. Anita said that each year she and Judith split a load of about 15 letters of reference for OCS seniors each fall. The reference letter, especially one from a PhD known in the long-term, is a powerful, rare tool in college acceptances that these students can utilize to access colleges and universities, on the road to career choice and happiness.

STEAM uses the practices of the community—program activities, trips, projects, and referencing writing—in order to develop the social and cultural capital of participants to achieve the domain on interest. Through practices like structuring physical activity, providing technical vernacular, giving students documentation of their coding work, writing college references, and taking students to potential internship location STEAM provides students with resources that are socially valuable.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that STEAM, and more broadly OCS, is an intentional community of practice that affords low-income youth of color access to some of the social and cultural capital that they otherwise would not have. I explain that the program does more work than simply develop the CPR they advertise as the purpose of STEAM. Using the three-component model of communities of practice (Wenger et al., 2002) I have shown that STEAM is interested in the domain of college success, career choice, and future happiness of its participants. They maintain a community that promotes the social capital to achieve this interest through staff choice and peer connections. And they use program activities and referencing as the tools to promote the social and cultural capital necessary for the domain of interest.

Conclusion: Looking at the Social in Out-of-school Programs

I came back home this summer, after having worked and researched at OCS STEAM for the 10-week period, with two impressions of the program and that I aimed to research further: the program's focus on grit/non-cognitive factors in student success and its less articulated development of social and cultural capital. I understood that these were two ideas that were at play in some way in the program's intervention and I was eager to find out what was going on. Coincidentally, Angela Duckworth was coming to give a lecture on grit at Swarthmore in the fall and I saw this as a great opportunity to advance my thinking. Sitting in the lecture, hearing Duckworth speak on grit as a psychological construct and non-cognitive factor, and listening to the students' questions from the audience, I began to formulate my sense that grit, the notion of persevering and sticking with challenges, is a psychological concept that neglects the social contexts that individuals face. A student in the audience at the lecture asked Duckworth how she sees grit working for low-income people of color who face the realities of structural inequality. Duckworth answered by simply reiterating that grit works for success. As a student of sociology, anthropology, and educational studies I could not accept that grit is the key factor, or missing link to success, that works for everybody. I left this lecture thinking that grit could not completely explain what was happening at STEAM.

What I have found in this study is that STEAM is an intentional community of practice that aims to provide participants with college success, future happiness, and career choice through the development of social and cultural capital. STEAM uses the language of grit to describe the intervention, saying that it helps participants develop the curiosity, persistence, and resilience to succeed through college as lifelong learners. However, the intervention features far more than just the development of these gritty, non-cognitive factors: it aims to help participants

cultivate social and cultural capital. The program engages with the opportunity gap from the perspective that social and cultural resources are not evenly distributed or valued and that low-income students of color do not have the symbolically valuable resources that white, middle-class students have. While the program explicitly engages with Duckworth's rhetoric when they aim to develop a lifelong learner's mindset, in actuality they stage an intervention that is conscious of social structures as they aim to develop forms of capital, or resources that will help the participants achieve college success, career choice, and happiness—the domain of interest of the community. The program community relies on middle-class staff connecting with participants and participants connecting with each other to assure a durable social network for participants that they can draw social resources from. They also use the practices of program activities and reference writing to promote social and cultural capital building.

Grit itself is a name for one example of cultural capital that participants can draw resources from. Having grit, or being able to demonstrate that one can stick with a task or goal for a long period of time, is a way of being that is socially valuable, can be utilized in school and work, and spoken or written about in things like college admissions essays.

Through my analysis of the program I have found the spaces that I see as the development of social and cultural capital of participants. I have stated some of the ways in which I see these resources being able to be transferred for other forms of capital, and being able to be “cashed in on” in dominant social spaces in the future. One includes using tech vernacular learned in design thinking and coding (cultural capital) to gain valuable tech internships (social capital and future economic capital). Another is learning how to comport oneself when playing sports in a structured setting (cultural capital) which can gain a student access to varsity sports (social capital) and eventually college sports scholarships (economic capital). However,

developing social and cultural capital does not mean that a participant will mobilize these forms of capital and use them to reach the domain of interest, or “cash in” on them. The forms of capital developed in the program will only be useful if participants use them outside of the program, in dominant spaces like school, college, and the middle class workplace. This program and other out-of-school programs provide the participants with tools and opportunities, as opposed to changing the social structure to close the opportunity gap. Because of this, any intervention program that wishes to effectively combat the opportunity gap must help participants transfer what they learn in the program to the dominant social structure.

Intrator and Siegel (2014) actively develop the supercognitives of students in project coach and explain that is what is most important in out-of-school programs is “deconstructing, analyzing, and relentlessly teaching youth how to build and deploy elements contained in processes” (152). They propose an active teaching, coaching, reflecting on, and using of the supercognitives they aim to develop in participants. They came to this conclusion upon seeing that participants who mastered the domain of interest at the program were not translating this to success in school (Intrator and Siegel, 2014, p. 145). They recognized that what was taking place at the program—the development of supercognitives—was not matching with the diversity of expectations and realities that low-income youth of color experience outside of the program. A student who might have mastered the quietude of watching a fellow play at a squash game might be loud in class with his friends at school, not realizing that being quieter in class is valuable from the teacher’s perspective.

The youth in STEAM maintain a similar level of diversity in their outside-of-program experiences—their homes, other activities, schools, and friendships. As I only spent one summer researching at the program in the middle school portion I do not have enough data to determine if

the participants in STEAM and OCS mobilize their social and cultural capital outside of the program. I do not know if participants see a connection between the resources they are developing in the program and their use in society—in schools, in college applications, in college, in work. Further research could, perhaps, employ a longitudinal study of the STEAM cohort as they progress through OCS and to college. I would ask which, if any, students mobilize their capital, and how they do so. I would explore if the program has structured in specific ways to help students see their new abilities to mobilize and use capital in dominant spaces.

In the longitudinal study I would explore the multitude of experiences participants have and see if students see the connection in these experiences to their capital development at STEAM and OCS and “cash in” on the connections. Do participants know that they have a portfolio full of materials that are valuable at internships and in private high school applications? Do participants know that they have PhDs to write them references to use for top colleges? Do participants realize that they can use the structured play they have learned from health and wellness to show a strong effort in a varsity sport tryout in school? And do some students, like the Volunteer Transfers, have more reinforcement at their schools of social and cultural capital that might allow them to mobilize it more effectively? If STEAM and OCS participants do not see the connection between the program and the other spaces which may determine their success, then STEAM would benefit from the teaching, coaching, reflecting, and using program learnings model from Intrator and Siegel (2014). STEAM and OCS could have students regularly reflect on their school experiences and aim to see the connections between the two spaces. They could make students explicitly aware that they are gaining social resources to help them succeed outside of the program. And they can have students practice using these resources both in and out of the program. The program develops social and cultural capital from using bay-area based

resources like coding and design thinking. Does that help participants gain social and cultural capital for only tech industries or can these forms of capital be used in other spaces? I would also be curious to see if participants have the social and cultural capital to succeed at an internship in finance in a city like New York. I wonder if the program would need to be more intentional about developing social and cultural capital for a diversity of middle class spaces if they are invested in career choice for participants.

Out-of-school programs work within the existing social structure. After having conducted this study, I believe that these programs should consider the forms of capital they can develop, mobilize, and ensure the successful use of in participants. I think back to the answer Duckworth gave to the question of how low-income students can succeed from using grit—they can get gritty. Out-of-school programs that emphasize grit and non-cognitive factors, and put all of their energy in the notion that developing them will give any student success, should consider that the work they do at their programs could give participants social and cultural capital. Grit is simply one instance of cultural capital that can be developed and mobilized in addition to numerous other possibilities in out-of-school programs that are communities of practice. Intrator and Siegel (2014) are conscious of the fact that grit alone will not guarantee every student success in dominant social spaces. Grit, when used in isolation as a mindset that every successful person must have, can distract programs from the diverse social contexts that people experience, and the potential for developing social and cultural capital for these contexts within programs. Programs should use their time to develop students' social resources if they wish to help low-income students of color defy the odds of the opportunity gap without making structural changes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Parent Interview Protocol

Thank you so much for participating in this study.

This interview will ask how you became involved with OCS, Why you chose this program, what you expect from the program, etc. Again, remember that you may choose to not answer a question at any time for any reason, and that you may withdraw or take a break from your participation at any time with no repercussions.

Questions:

- How did you hear about the OCS?
- Why did you choose to have your child apply?
- What was the process of enrolling your child like?
- Was the process challenging at any moments?
- Did you need assistance in the application?
- If so, who did you correspond with for help?
- What did you like/dislike about the process of applying?
- Are you satisfied with your child's experience at the Organization?
- Are there things you would change about the Organization?
- What do you think the Summer Program can do for your child?
- Do you plan to keep your child enrolled in the Organization?
- Where did you go to middle and high school? What did you like/not like about it?
- What did you do after you left secondary school?
- Did you go to college? Why or why not? Looking back would you do anything differently?
- Are there others in your family who have attended college?
- Do you plan for your child to attend College/University? Why?
- Do you talk to your child about college? About their future? What do you talk about? Who else does your child talk to about their future/education?

Appendix 2. Staff Interview Protocol

Thank you so much for participating in this study.

This interview will ask how you some questions about your involvement with the OCS and your planning of the summer program. Again, remember that you may choose to not answer a question at any time for any reason, and that you may withdraw or take a break from your participation at any time with no repercussions.

Questions:

- How did you become involved with the Organization?
- What do you think are the Organization strengths?
- What challenges do you think the Organization faces?
- What do you see as the Organization goals for this STEAM summer program?
- Do you have any individual goals for this summer program in addition to those you see as the Foundation's goals? If so, what?
- How do you account for the program's overall mission in your planning of this summer program?
- How do you consider students' backgrounds as you think about developing the program?
- How successful would you consider the pilot year of the program to have been?
- What do you see as the role of parents in the Organization goals? In the STEAM program?
- What do you see as the role of the students' communities in the Organization's goals? In the Steam program?

Appendix 3. Recruitment E-mail for parents.

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Zack Kronstat and I am a College Intern at the Organization for this summer. During my time at the Foundation I plan to complete research for my thesis in Sociology/ Anthropology and Educational Studies for Swarthmore College. I am planning to write about experiences of STEAM students and their expectations and thoughts about college.

I am looking for the parents/ guardians of STEAM summer youth who would like to participate in a 30-45 minute interview about their experiences with the Foundation. I would like to hear more about how you heard about the program, what your hopes are for it, and what your overall goals are for your child.

I hope that the results of this study will contribute to the Foundation's overall success towards achieving its mission.

If you are interested in participating please contact me at zkronst1@swarthmore.edu or directly at the Foundation expressing your interest. Thank you so much for your time!

Best,
Zachary Kronstat

Appendix 4. Document of Informed Consent for Parents

Title of the Study: College Access and Success from an Early Summer Youth Program

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

You are invited to participate in a research study about how youth experiences inform their expectations and thoughts about college access and success.

You have been asked to participate because you are a parent or guardian of a child in the STEAM Summer Program. Your participation involves a 30-45 minute interview about your experiences in the program so far and your goals for your child.

The purpose of the research is to gain a better understanding the ways in which the youth experiences, including their time at the Organization, schooling, home lives, etc. contribute to their understanding of the college process of access and success.

I will be audio recording the interviews. I will be the only who has access to the interviews, which will be stored in a password-protected folder on my computer. Once all of the work is used and the final draft of my thesis is turned in, the materials will be wiped from my computer.

You may opt out of any part of the study at any time.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO ME?

The risks of participation are minimal, however it is possible that the interview may include personal family information. You may withdraw or take a break from participation at any point in this study.

There is the chance of anything electronically stored being hacked, but the information is password protected, so the chance is very slim.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO ME?

Yes, I hope that my research will inform the program in a way that will improve summer programming at the Foundation and support the achievement of their goals. In doing this, I hope to aid in the educational attainment of students in the program.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE PROTECTED?

- In the final draft of this study, a pseudonym in place of your name and your child's will be used and all other identifying characteristics will be changed. All subjects in the study and locations will be made unidentifiable.
- I would like to directly quote research participants in the final draft of this study. If you give permission for me to directly quote you under a pseudonym, please initial next to the line after the signature and date. (The research subjects' initials are required).

- All data will be kept in password protected, encrypted folders.
- At the end of each interview, I will ask you if you have any concerns about what you have shared appearing in my final project. If there is any information that you would not like to have in the final write-up, it will not be used.
-

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after you leave today you should contact the Principal Investigator Zachary Kronstat at 516-592-2214

If you are not satisfied with the response of the research team, have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, you should contact the Institutional Review Board at Swarthmore College at 610-957-6150.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you begin participation and change your mind you may end your participation at any time without penalty to you or your child. Your decision to participate or to withdraw will not in any way affect your child’s participation in the program now or in the future.

Your signature indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

Name of Participant (please print): _____

I consent to participating in an interview in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Appendix 5. Document of Informed Consent for Staff

Title of the Study: College Access and Success from an Early Summer Youth Program

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

You are invited to participate in a research study about how youth experiences inform their expectations and thoughts about college access and success

You have been asked to participate because you are a Staff member of the STEAM Summer Program.

The purpose of the research is to gain a better understanding the ways in which the youth experiences, including their time at the Foundation, schooling, home lives, etc. contribute to their understanding of the college process of access and success.

This study will include staff at the Foundation, summer youth, and parents/guardians of summer youth.

This research will take place at the Foundation before, during and after the program weeks.

I will be the only who has access to collected materials for this study, which will be stored in a password-protected folder on my computer. Once all of the work is used and the final draft of my thesis is turned in, the materials will be wiped from my computer.

WHAT WILL MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

There are two aspects of your participation. First, if you consent to be interviewed, you will be interviewed 30-45 about your understanding of the goals and practices of the summer program.

Second, you will be asked for consent for the researcher to take field notes during staff meetings and planning meetings.

You may opt out of either part of the study at any time.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO ME?

The risks of participation are minimal, however it is possible that the interview may include personal information. You may withdraw or take a break from participation at any point in this study.

There is the chance of anything electronically stored being hacked, but the information is password protected, so the chance is very slim.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO ME?

Yes, I hope that my research will inform the program in a way that will improve summer

programming at the Foundation and support the achievement of their goals. In doing this, I hope to aid in the educational attainment of students in the program.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE PROTECTED?

- In the final draft of this study, a pseudonym in place of your name and your child’s will be used and all other identifying characteristics will be changed. All subjects in the study and locations will be made unidentifiable.
- I would like to directly quote research participants in the final draft of this study. If you give permission for me to directly quote you under a pseudonym, please initial next to the line after the signature and date. (The research subjects initials are required).
- All data will be kept in password protected, encrypted folders.
- At the end of each interview, I will ask you if you have any concerns about what you have shared appearing in my final project. If there is any information that you would not like to have in the final write-up, it will not be used.
-

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after you leave today you should contact the Principal Investigator Zachary Kronstat at 516-592-2214

If you are not satisfied with the response of the research team, have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, you should contact the Institutional Review Board at Swarthmore College at 610-957-6150.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you begin participation and change your mind you may end your participation at any time without penalty to you or your child. Your decision to participate or to withdraw will not in any way affect your child’s participation in the program now or in the future.

Your signature indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

Name of Participant (please print): _____

I consent to participating in an interview in this study.

Staff Signature

Date

I consent to the Principal Investigators Field Note Collection/ Participant Observations