Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Webinar

Presented by Jennifer Bruen

Jennifer Bruen: Okay I think we'll go ahead and get started, others may join in a few minutes and we'll just keep moving. So my name is Jennifer Bruen and I'm the project manager of the REI University Center which is an economic development administrative funded program. University centers are found all over the United States, there are about 60 of them. It's a program that has been in existence for decades. If you're not familiar with the economic development administration, its part of the US Department of Commerce and the university center program usually is minimally funded but its maximum leveraging. We have been in operation since 2011 and we join with our other university centers once a year and we share the work that we do here in Michigan so were always connecting with the Chicago region EDA office and the other university centers which are in the surrounding states. If you are not familiar with it I can send you information about how the university centers function and how they came to be but today were going to talk about one particular activity that we have supported through the past 8 or 9 years and that is our Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects and I know that's a long title for what we do but I think you'll understand why its titled this way. Often we have faculty members across the state that are teaching field based or practicum is what we call it here at the Urban Planning school at MSU but you may be one of those, I don't think so, when I just took a quick intro from those that are on the zoom it sounds like we've got some city representation and not so much faculty members but we will probably have those joining us maybe on the call today and then in the future. But it doesn't matter because either way we have been able to create sort of a matchmaking between communities and faculty members through this program. And so the REI University Center has a little bit of funding and we have been able to support about 60 Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects at 13 to 15 different universities and colleges across Michigan.

So I'm going to go right into the presentation, I just wanted to give you that intro. And maybe what well do is since it does seem like a smaller group, we could do a quick intro of those folks that are back on the zoom and those that are in the room right now. I didn't know if we were going to have hundreds or if we were going to have a small group, and since this is a smaller group, well just so you know whose here.

Rex LaMore: Rex LaMore with Michigan State University.

Sara Moring-Hilt: Sara Moring-Hilt with Michigan State University.

Ahmad Pourmavahed: Ahmad Pourmavahed from Kettering University in Flint.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay those folks that are on zoom could we do an introduction maybe starting with Dearborn?

Tom Paison: Hi yeah so City of Dearborn we have 3 members of the economic development department, we have Hassan Sheikh deputy director, Tom Paison assistant department head, and

Steve Hortsman who is our coordinator for our corridor authorities and various other things hahaha.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay, Greyling?

Eric Pajeski: Its myself Eric Pajeski, im the zoning administrator and economic development director.

Jennifer Bruen: And City of Besmir?

Charly Loper: I'm Charly Loper I'm the City Manager for Besmir.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay great, let me grab my mouse and get going! Okay, glad you were able to attend! I don't know how you found out about this, hopefully you are already talking to somebody at a university or the higher ed institution that's in your region and maybe they talked to you about it, maybe you have worked in the past with us, maybe you've worked with MSU on field-based types of projects, semester-long student team projects. Whatever your reason is for attending today were just glad you're here. What we are going to do is were going to talk about what Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects really are, the success that we've seen with these projects, and then what you can expect when you're completing your project with your student team. So I actually have a video for you, it gives a nice overview and introduction, we were asked by MSHDA, this was probably about 3 or 4 years ago, to put together a video about Place making and how Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects can help communities to achieve their goals in the realm of place making. So I'm going to have Sara whose already queued up this video play it for you and if you're having trouble watching the video or the sound, could you put something in the chat box to let me know rather than blurting out what the problem is and then well do our best to fix it but it should work just fine for everyone. (Play video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtJh113xw5M&t=199s) So maybe you've seen that video, probably not, but we did produce it for the place making effort, we had a partnership with MSHDA for about a year, a little over a year, and it worked very well and as noticed in the slide at the end, a couple slides, it was one of the projects that we were able to support and also, we, I noticed that back then we had supported only 11 universities and I think were up to 13 or 15 now and we have done more than 50 projects, were probably in the high 60s now for numbers of projects across the state. So, moving forward there is another video and I can send it to you. It's a good description of how every project is supported and how that looks a little more specifically but were just going to do that with the PowerPoint today. So the model, I'm going to back up a little bit to explain how the REI University Center model even works. The Student-Led is only one aspect of what we do, one part of the larger program. The University center offers support to experts or professionals or practitioners or academics that are working in the area trying to develop a tool model policy program of practice that is going to support economic development in a *stressed* community, and that's the key word. There is come criteria that you have to meet to be able to work with us. So we've produced co-learning plans, is what we call them, collaborative learning, and maybe you've heard about those, there are a lot of them and we've done some great work with some partners across the state on that. But that's not what we're talking about today, were talking about the student leds. If you're interested in innovation

fellows, that's another aspect of what we do, and that is supporting on the ground action or implementation. So you may have a champion in your community that has been working for an organization or not, they could be somebody that's just a real good leader in your community that they want to put some action behind a new tool or new practice. And then the technical assistance that you see on this model is the Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Project because we do other types of technical assistance out of our center here, it's not just with student teams. We try to support a number of teams across the state throughout the year. This is a semester by semester basis, so I'll get into more detail on that. Were also encouraging any of our partners to help us with disseminating or transferring the knowledge or the information, and that includes Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects, we want to share those across the state. So we would ask you if you were a partner with us to really share the work because it helps to get other communities encouraged thinking that they can also get something off the ground in one semester with a student team, so we would ask that you help us to share the work. I would like to also introduce you to another area that we have taken on and that is working with the Redevelopment Ready Communities and these are the certified communities. If you're not familiar with RRC communities and the new program that was introduced a year or two ago, I have a little bit of a description here but really what it is is MEDC, the Michigan , decided that helping communities to prepare for development was probably a really good idea and so they said let's look at what are the different factors that need to be in place, do they need to have an updated master plan, do they need new ordinance language, do they need a marketer to promote a site. So they said if they can have communities kind of check the boxes on some of these things, then they're going to certify them and once they're certified they're sort of designated as being ready for development. When we went to MEDC and talked to them we said well you know maybe we could put some student teams into these projects in helping you to get them going in these different communities. So they could be helping, students could be helping with a variety of things for RRC communities. We really are just beginning to roll this out, it started in August, the partnership and we invited RRCs to participate in our Innovate Michigan Summit and now were hoping that were going to be able to move to the next step with them and get them s student team from any one of their local or regional higher ed institutions and help them to be able to start into that certification and use that certification. So the RRC, I don't know if you 3 are RRCs, id Dearborn an RRC? I just wanted to ask before we move on, is Tom there?

Tom Paison: Yeah I'm here.

Jennifer Bruen: Are you an RRC Community?

Tom Paison: Yeah Dearborn got certified, I think we finished a year and a half ago, two years ago.

Jennifer Bruen: That's what I thought. Yeah so this would be something that you should definitely take a look at because we are really targeting these RRCs, MEDC wants to see their RRC Communities work with the student teams to help them so if there's anything that you're thinking about moving forward with that could be done by a student team in a semester, we definitely should continue to talk because this is a real opportunity for RRCs and I think I have a list about 35 or 36 communities and you're probably on that list, well you are on that list.

Tom Paison: Yeah MEDC was the ones that pointed us to this.

Jennfier Bruen: Okay good, good. The others, Grayling, are you an RRC community?

Eric Pajeski: Yes we were certified about a year ago now.

Jennifer Bruen: Great, wonderful, well then were going to want to keep the conversation going on this because if we can help you to find the right match we will do that. Of course it's better if you probably figure out which partner you'd prefer to work with. Many times you'll have a faculty member in mind, somebody that maybe you've worked with in the past, but if you're struggling to make that connection again, we can definitely help you to facilitate that if you're interested.

Eric Pajeski: Okay great.

Jennifer Bruen: Besmir, are you an RRC?

Charly Loper: Yeah we are, we got certified last year.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay this is really good, I'm glad that you guys were able to make it onto the zoom. Well, Kettering's in the room just in case any of you are thinking about working with Kettering and obviously Dr. LaMore is here too from MSU Urban Planning. Which by the way, MSU just released their call for projects. I did send over their practicum project application to MEDC so you should receive that, or have you received it yet? Maybe you've received it. Should have come in your email. Maybe with this announcement, I'm not sure how their handling it but, if you're interested in working with an MSU team, especially Dearborn since maybe it's a little bit closer for you. Okay so REI has funded over 60 projects and the 152,500 is the money that has gone to the student teams. It typically, it comes into their coffers, and it is used for printing, data purchase, meeting attendance, mileage, whatever the students are incurring as costs associated with your project. So every project is funded up to $2,500, up to, so if they ask for less then they'll probably get the less, and if they ask for a little bit more they can't exceed the $2,500 but a budget must be included where they have broken down the scope of work and decided how much they think things are going to cost and they do this with the guidance of their professor. The money actually goes to the university. That's right. It doesn't go to the students. No it's not exactly going to the students in the form of checks or money to them but it is in the MSUs, sorry not the MSU, in the universities, they're the fiduciaries, so they will serve as the recorder on that. It's not given to the actual students and it's not given to the community either but it's in a way helping the community because many times these student teams when they do a call, and I know with MSU, they require a bit of a match and so this has been often, the REI support has helped them to make that match and I know that we've got many examples where its worked out really well. So this year, we've already done one call, and maybe you noticed, it was October 7th, it was soon after out big event we hosted in August, late August. We've received a couple of applications but we really wanted to focus on the RRC communities this time with our call, so the application is available. Its online right now and it is due on November 13th so if there are any questions or concerns or anything you can contact me and you'll get my contact information at the end but the application is due then and then there will be some decision

making and then you'll receive a notice, just like you would for any sort of mini-grant, and your partner university would then be contracted with us and that's usually how the process works. It's a little more te4chnical than that by working university to university but that's, to simplify things, that's how it works. So the final product, when we say product its usually a report, sometimes there's a video or there's a webinar in addition to the report and that's only if the student team and the community have decided they want to put together any kind of video, they can put that into their budget, but the final product is a report. Sometimes they range anywhere from 50-150 pages in length, they usually include a lot of community data and an overview of the community but then it can move into, depending on if it's a business college student team or if it's an urban planning or if its, we've even had social work from the Westside of the state, western Michigan university had a social work team that worked on a project, and I've heard engineering is actually, we have Kettering in the room, so we've had an engineering project come through. So really it's not limited to just your typical urban planning kinds of projects it can open up to lots of different schools and colleges. So applications are found on the reicenter.org website. I also want to let you know that there will be, in addition, applications for what im about to describe or explain to you with Rex's help, is an EGLE opportunity. It is an EGLE grant we have received. We have some funding available for Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects out of that grant but well explain it in a little bit more but both of these application will be available to you on the websites. CCED is Center for Community and Economic Development, it's exactly that CCED website, msuced, and REI is reicenter.org. So let's go through a little bit of the expectations that you will have, you and your student team. When you apply you want to make sure that you are actually working with the distressed component of your community or your community is maybe outlined as being a more distressed are. Maybe you have low incomes and poverty. So that is one major criteria that must be met. You have to be able to engage the community throughout the project. The student teams have to be able to go there at least once. It's not pertinent but it is, it helps to strengthen the project. It must have, you application scope of work must, it has to be pretty obvious that there's an economic component to what you're about to do. So it creates jobs, retains jobs, creates businesses, so on so forth. It has to be able to deliver the ideas of creating a knowledge economy or a high growth entrepreneurship within the scope of work that you're going to be asking your students to do. And it has to provide economic development professionals in your community with the access to this technical assistance or the data within that report. If your team is going to use that information then that's great, or other professionals that are working in economic development in your region or community, they have to be able to use this information that they'll be developing. And then where feasible, we really would like to see projects come in where there is a collaboration with the region's economic development district, that's what the EDD stands for, and these are the regional planning entities. For instance SEMCOG is a, what we consider an EDD, they're in the EDA realm, so the economic development administration often works with them and so they have asked us to keep in sort of in the family and you know allow those regions to be a part of these projects too and really to get their input and feedback. Many times when we receive an application we want to make sure the regions EDD is aware of the project, they're familiar with you know what's going to happen or they understand what's going to happen with the work. They may even want to be in on the decision making with the

students or in the development of that scope of work so we do ask if it's possible for you to do that. And then the last, and this might seem very obvious, that the students have one semester to complete your project, but sometimes we receive applications that scope of work is extremely lengthy and there's a lot, it looks very laborious, and it may not be able to be completed in a semester and that would possibly cause you a problem to be awarded if we thinks it's something that would carry on beyond that semester. I has to be a reasonable scope of work. So were looking for 10 page summaries max, they don't have to be really lengthy but they do need to describe the problem and the research that will be undertaken and the results and the findings that you're hoping to get out of the project. We also would like if you could include a couple of pages, maybe just one page, on how you plan to share the work that's done and where you would like to share it, how you're going to do that. Many communities use social media already so this makes sense that they could share the work with the students that way. We do ask also that you acknowledge the REI university center in your final report and we can help you to do that. And then, what the really exciting oar of this thing is, that you get to present with the student team. If you have a few students that you want to kind of hand select, or if they're the only ones that are available, which sometimes is the case if they graduate, but you get to attend and present and this is really a very wonderful opportunity for the student because eon they get a second or third chance at really polishing their presentation. Maybe they presented it to your board or your community and then they get this time again to do it at our innovate Michigan summit which typical happens at the end of August or beginning of September. This year actually we already have a date, it's September 3rd. We really really encourage a community partner to be there or even other representatives from the community to be in the audience to ask good questions and to keep the students to task on their presentations and maybe to help them to support them. So those are the deliverables and now I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Rex LaMore and he can talk about the new EGLE grant that we've received and how Student-Led, Faculty-Guided is some part of that grant.

Rex LaMore: Right, so very similar to the kinds of objectives that we seek with our REI university center Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects, were also interested in supporting partnerships between students and faculty, faculty and their students, and businesses involved in the material salvage and reuse sector. So this is a very specific sector targeting, this is part of our work in ending blight and abandonment in communities and looking at ways that communities might find value and salvaged materials from abandoned structures so were anxious to support independent studies, student teams probably from engineering schools or construction management programs or architectural schools who might work with businesses or development leaders in the community to talk about how might we deconstruct salvaged materials or might even provide technical assistance to very specific business on how to do marketing and increase their resale portfolio for the local community. So were looking to support 4-6 Student-Led, Faculty-Guided partnerships within that very specific sector of the business community. If you or some of your colleagues might be working with those businesses, partnering with land banks or other institutions that are collaborating with this, we welcome the opportunity to support Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects there.

Jennifer Bruen: Domicology. Can you do a quick definition of domicology?

Rex LaMore: Domicology seeks to create a new paradigm on the built environment that recognizes that structures have an end of life and that we should recognize the end of life and plan, design, construct, use, reuse, and salvage the materials that go into the built environment in such a way that we reduce the amount of material that enters the landfills and maximize the amount of material that gets reused and reduce the negative effects of blight and abandonment in our communities. They put an incredible financial burden on some of our most vulnerable people and places. That wasn't t too short but.

Jennifer Bruen: That was good.

Rex LaMore: I encourage you to look at our webpage, domicology.

Jennifer Bruen: Yeah, we do have one more slide but you did a nice job.

Rex LaMore: Yeah there's two components to the project, one is the innovation hub which is really about building the capacity of the salvage sector to do a better job and increase their market share and then the second piece is actually to find some use for what we call the high volume, low value material that comes out of a lot of these structures which is generally the wood or the shingles. A lot of the other material, like the copper and stuff, already gets recycled. So were interested in finding ways to reuse that high volume, low value stuff and we've got a little research project going on here on campus in partnership with our construction management program and our forestry department to find reuses for the wood that comes out of these structures. More on that later!

Jennifer Bruen: So you can see the domicology website at the bottom, domicology.msu.edu, and then Dr. LaMores email if you want to contact him about the EGLE support.

Rex Lamore: In fact Steve, are you still there Steve?

Steve Hortsman: Yes.

Rex LaMore: How ya doing buddy?

Steve Hortsman: Good.

Rex LaMore: Good so any of those businesses in your community, send me some contact information if you don't mind, or actually everyone on the call, if you've got an architectural salvage retail business or a demolition company or a deconstruction company in your community, one of the first things were going to be doing here is surveying one to find out what their training and technical assistance needs are. So if you just happen to see a couple just tell me, were trying to get good input so we need good contacts with that sector so if you don't mind just send me a couple of businesses that are in your town and I'd be glad to hear from our upper peninsula colleagues as well.

Steve Hortsman: We can do that no problem.

Rex LaMore: Thanks Steve, appreciate that.

Steve Hortsman: You bet.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay so I hope it's clear that its actually two different applications. There's the REI and then there will be the EGLE Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects but it will be clear because it will be on two different websites. But well do some follow up with you and send you links to maybe past reports you can see other projects that are of interest to you. If you could follow up with me at bruenjen@msu.edu I can get your email addresses and send you more information and then if you have any questions with the application, it's really quite simple and very easy to fill out, but if you also need help finding a faculty partner somewhere, let me know that too because we do have a pool of about over 100 that have come forward and had said that they're interested at some point in the last 8 years, I don't know if they're all teaching field based at the semester that you're interested in doing the work but if they're teaching a field based class or a capstone class when you need the work done and they're interested then work directly with them and then just do the application together. Do we have any questions right now that we can answer for you?

Tom Paison: No I think we're good. I guess one question, the project were looking at is kind of a more straight up economic thing. We have a large cash economy in Dearborn that we've had a hard time capturing the shape and scale of and that's kind of one of the things were trying to get at because whenever we do business attraction or try to bring in new developers they look at the data that they can get from typical commercial and governmental sources and it doesn't capture a lot of the activity going on here so I was wondering if you know, do we have any faculty partners that might be appropriate to be in more the economics end of it?

Jennifer Bruen: You know that is really interesting that you're bringing this up. We've had a lot of discussion over here about the underground economy sort of. And I think that's kind of what you're referring to, I mean it doesn't have to be the dark evil stuff it can just be the cash economy that folks are participating in and they've decided that that's the way they want to go to make their income and service on that so we have been looking at this and we do have a partner, she's now at the university of Michigan flint, but she was an innovation fellow for us last year and she was very instrumental on working with, I'm not sure if you know about the build institute I think is what it is called, the new nonprofit that's helping these sort of these lower income entrepreneurials or inventors to scale up and she felt, Dr. Fields felt, that was a good organization to work with to learn more about the cash economy. I'm not sure if she's still able to work with that particular, with build institute, but if there's any way for us to learn maybe what's going in Dearborn, and a student team might be able to talk to dr. Fields and with you and maybe you can figure out how you would do that, how you'd measure it or how you'd examine it.

Tom Paison: Yeah I mean we have a large immigrant community, there's a lot of entrepreneurs and small business and a lot of things circulate within that and every time we try to bring in any kind of an out of the area developer or a national corporate for anything, the numbers they pull really don't reflect what's going on here at all. You kind of got to convince them to take a chance and when they take a chance they do really well here, like way over their projections. Or the new Forrester Rags restaurant, that guy, they expected a payoff time of that restaurant of 3-5 years and it actually paid itself off in 8 months.

Jennifer Bruen: Well Dr. Fields was looking mostly in Detroit but maybe she has sort of metric system or some way that you could, I can always reach out to her and see if I can connect you with her, I don't know, yeah there's got to be a way to do this. Let's keep talking and well see what we can do.

Tom Paison: Great, looking forward to working with you.

Jennifer Bruen: You may have some students there that would take an interest in it. It's a little bit of a distance though being at U of M Flint, she used to be at Madonna University which is much better for you, but they may have a colleague that's interested in this same topical area.

Tom Paison: Yeah maybe she knows someone else who's working in the same general area either at Wayne State or u of m Dearborn or MSU you know anybody kind of in our region.

Jennifer Bruen: Alright well we can put some feelers out, I've got some notes so I can follow up with ya.

Tom Paison: Great, appreciate that. Cause yeah we've been trying to figure out how to crack this nut for at least a decade. We just have come up with good, and were a decent sized city but we have a small department. Our core ECD staff is like 6 people.

Rex LaMore: We've had the pleasure of working with Dearborn on a number of Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects over the years and you guys have always been good partners from a faculty perspective you know that's an important aspect that your partner is there for you when you need him to review the materials that the students have generated and their there for you when the students are asking questions about certain directions they should be going and Dearborn has always been a good partner for us so that stands well for possibly finding other faculty that might partner with you.

Tom Paison: Yeah we think it would be a good experience and were not the only community with an entrepreneurial immigrant community that probably is experiencing the same issue with their economic development efforts. I would think if we could figure out a method to do it, it would be a replicable model for some of these other communities.

Jennifer Bruen: Yeah that's for sure. And youre right, as we become more and more international you know well have more and more of this discussion and communities all over southeat Michigan are going to be trying to get a handle on it.

Tom Paison: Oh yeah.

Jennifer Bruen: Yeah, so that's a good point. Any other questions?

Rex LaMore: Well any other project ideas that people have that theyre thinking about that they might be willing to supervise a student or student team on, give some direction to? Grayling did you have something or Besmir?

Eric Pajeski: Sorry can't think of anything right now, Eric from Grayling. We've had a lot of projects in the last three, four years dealing with RRC and main street and everything else we've been doing this last budget year so we kind of need to take a break from projects, kind of get

everything closed out and buttoned up. So haven't really had anything in the pipeline at this moment.

Jennifer Bruen: Eric, we'll be running this solicitation type of thing 2 to 3 times a year so you could be looking for a summer, I would look for a summer application and that should be released in the spring so, early spring well be looking for, right so you may even have an independent study that you might want to get done in the summer, by then you might have something on your mind that you'd like to have a student work on.

Eric Pajeski: Yeah probably the best time for me.

Jennifer Bruen: Yeah they're good, it depends, if they're not in class it's a little harder but they have more time to do the work but they do need a faculty member to guide them. We've had applications where it's an independent study as long as they do have some guidance from somebody on campus.

Eric Pajeski: Gotcha.

Charly Loper: And this is Charly from Besmir. I want to run some ideas past some people here fist because we have a couple of potential projects, not exactly sure where were going to go with it though. So I was just looking for more information so thank you for providing more information about the program.

Jennifer Bruen: If you send me an email, all of you if you send me an email, that says I'm interested in more, I will send you links to other projects and contact information for maybe some faculty members I know that are maybe in your area in case you want to just reach out to them directly and talk to them about a project idea, it could just be an idea and float it by them and they'll have some good input for it.

Rex LaMore: You know the Western Upper Peninsula, that's where she's at right, really is somewhat of a challenge for any students from MSU to get up there to be of any value to you, it's pretty difficult unless they're there for some sort of a summer independent study. So one of the things that we encourage communities like Besmir is to look around at your local community colleges and other universities and build connections and/or identify a faculty there who might be willing to participate with you in a project. I mean Northern Michigan or Michigan Tech or even a Wisconsin school. If you've got a relationship with a Wisconsin university and they have some desire, I don't think, we wouldn't be limited to just Michigan, that would be our first time by the way that we ever got outside Michigan. But I don't think that would be a problem for us programmatically.

Charly Loper: Okay thank you.

Rex LaMore: Yeah, but then the value we see in that is not only do you get a particular project with that local institution but then you build a relationship with them and then they're there for you the next time you need something as well so it's, were about trying to strengthen those relationships between higher ed and our community and economic development colleagues around the state as well so think about that opportunity as well.

Charly Loper: We have several that are at Michigan Tech and Northern that have worked with us and done really a great job, great job on the projects.

Rex LaMore: And Lake Superior?

Charly Loper: Yeah Lake Superior State. I can send you links to any one of those, or all of those, you can see what the work was and how we did it.

Jennifer Bruen: Okay anything else? Any other, no? Okay well I hope to hear from all of you on the zoom. If you think of anything just send an email and ask questions. Please spread the word too to other organizations. If you're at a conference and you hear somebody else kind of talking about a project and they just can't get it off the ground, suggest a Student-Led, Faculty-Guided project to them. A lot of times I attend the Media Conference or you know I'm out there at the Rural Conference up in Crystal Mountain and I do hear communities talking about things that they just don't have the resources to get going and I recommend over and over again that student teams really produce good work and they should work with their local preferred faculty member too. Well thank you for participating and well do this again and this has been recorded so if you want to revisit it or send it on to a colleague you'll be able to send a link to it. It'll be on the homepage, Sara and I were talking about all the locations that we could put it on the website so it'll be all over the place on the website, available for you. Have a good day, thank you!