A Matter of Balance:
Developing an Interactive Falls Prevention
Website to Enhance Program Connection

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Abstract

As part of its mission, the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW) is dedicated to preventing falling among older adults. A Matter of Balance (MOB), a falls prevention program, is a leading national model for combating falling among older adults. In the fall of 2013, the NCCHW, along with other stakeholders, identified gaps and needs for NC MOB programs on a state level, concluding that the creation of an interactive website for Master Trainers and Coaches would be the most effective approach to fulfill MOB needs across the state. With multiple requests for a centralized way of organizing data and an easy way to access MOB data in NC, this website will fulfill a variety of needs that will increase the efficiency of program implementation. The goal of this public service project was to work closely with a professional web designer to create an interactive website for MOB in NC. The process included reviewing of research conducted by NCCHW on MOB gaps and needs, identifying ideal website features, continuously reviewing website progress, pre-testing with community representatives before website launch, as well as reviewing latest literature on MOB. The final product includes a website that will facilitate effective communication between MOB implementers, a direct resource for up-to-date research and comparison of results/statistics, a generated events calendar, and most importantly, an easy to use interface for community members of all ages. With the success of this project, the NCCHW will have a valuable falls prevention resource that is easily accessible and readily available to distribute across the state. Falls are a major health concern in NC, and promotion of prevention programs like MOB, with an accessible website, will certainly spread the word about how to manage falls, and in turn, reduce the number of detrimental falls for older adults in this state. Through this project, I have learned the importance of fall

prevention programs for older adults, and the many benefits that evolve from collaboration between community partners. Hands on experience through out this project has strengthened my health promotion skills, and given me an opportunity to understand the necessity of civic engagement to enhance our community connections and health.

Key Words: NC MOB, grant, community, interactive website, development

Origins of the Project

A Matter of Balance

One out of three adults age 65 and older fall each year [1]. As people age, proprioception decreases, muscle mass decreases, fear of falling increases, and in turn, activities are restricted. Of those who fall, 30% suffer injuries that decrease mobility and independence and result in high medical costs [2]. Due to this combination of rather morbid variables, it is imperative that these issues are addressed in order to support the health of older adults. North Carolina falls injury data found that fall death rates by age in 2012 drastically increase from the age of 65 and up [3]. Falling is not limited to older adults, which is classified as 65 and up, but this population is at the highest risk for fall-related injury, and preventative steps must be taken.

Originating at Boston University in 2003, A Matter of Balance (MOB) is a falls prevention program that was developed to address this need for older adults. Having spread to 36 states in the U.S. and even to British Columbia, A Matter of Balance has become the national standard for preventing falls in the older adult population [4]. Healthcare is mostly associated with ideas of primary healthcare professionals, such as nurses, physical therapists, etc., yet there are areas of health care that have proven to be enhanced by preventative programs outside of primary healthcare settings. MOB, which started with implementation from primary healthcare workers, is a key example of this notion. These workers reported lack of time and funds to dedicate to this program, and in turn the program did not build the preventative connections and outreach that the creators had hoped for. MOB restructuring by Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Maine Medial Center's Geriatric Center, and Partnership for Healthy Aging, lead to the idea of community-based implementation, now known as the Matter of Balance Lay Leader Model (MOB-LL), which is still the current nationwide foundation [5]. Rather than using healthcare professionals, this program uses the following chain of command: lead trainer, to master trainers, to coaches, and coaches are the community members (chosen/volunteer) who are trained to teach the actual MOB classes to their fellow community members (a chart of this model can be seen at the bottom of this paper). Implementation by fellow community members creates a safe environment for peers to voice their concerns, and to address origins/issues of falling that are often overlooked.

MOB emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and to increase activity levels. Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors, and exercise to increase strength and balance [6]. In an extensive study conducted by Dr. Tara Healy et al., "participants experienced significant increases in Falls Efficacy, Falls Management, and Falls Control at six weeks, six months, and 12 months after class completion" [2].

In a study conducted by Tennstedt et al., 464 persons aged 60+ were recruited from 40 senior housing sites in Boston Metropolitan area to take part in a controlled trial of a group intervention to reduce the fear of falling and associated activity restriction in older adults.
Data were collected at baseline, and at 6-week, 6-month, and 12-month follow-ups. Compared with contact control subjects, intervention subjects reported increased levels of intended activity ($p < .05$) and greater mobility control ($p < .05$) immediately after the intervention. Effects at 12 months included improved social function ($p < .05$) and mobility range ($p < .05$) [8]. This study demonstrates the benefits that result from group-oriented falls prevention programs for older adults, and concludes that addressing the fear of falling is a valuable component of this style of intervention.

Reports to Congress are detailed and thorough, providing quality information to government officials to be used in reference for major decisions that effect citizens of the U.S. One report in particular offers a plea for the benefit of community based wellness and prevention programs.

Medicare provides health insurance for adults aged 65 and older, and as of July 2012, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reported enrollment of over 41 million individuals in the United States [9]. As previously mentioned, older adults (age 65 and up) are the targets of MOB programs, meaning many MOB participants around the nation are enrolled in Medicare. In September 2013, CMS submitted their evaluation of community-based wellness and prevention programs under Section 4202 (b) of the Affordable Care Act to Congress. In the summary of this report, CMS concluded that evidence based community wellness and prevention programs can improve outcomes and in some cases reduce costs for Medicare beneficiaries [10]. MOB is considered an evidence based community wellness and prevention programs, which according to CMS and the controlled study by Tennstedt et at., will improve outcomes of Medicare beneficiaries, as well as health on social and physical levels for older adults.

North Carolina Progress

North Carolina has become one of the 36 states to adopt MOB, with 43 master trainer sites throughout multiple regions, and an equal number of registered master trainers. Though NC has already established this program, areas of improvement and progress are needed. In the fall of 2013 via community request, the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW) was given the responsibility of determining the areas of need in NC MOB programs that could realistically be strengthened, and to secure funds to take action by completing a grant by December 2013.

Laurie Stradley, the Direction of State and Community Collaboration for the NCCHW, headed this engagement, and tasked me, the Community Collaboration Assistant for the NCCHW, with researching the NC MOB program gaps in relation to other states' MOB structure, as well as alternative falls prevention initiatives. Identifying areas of need through this research provided an integral piece of foundation for the grant, which was ultimately approved, securing funds from Blue Cross. Upon approval, the NCCHW, in collaboration with various stakeholders and community members, determined that a significant portion of the grant funds would be designated towards contracting a web developer to create an interactive website for NC MOB.

The creation of this website would at the very least reduce, and even eliminate, many of the identified gaps and areas of need for MOB programs in NC. Due to my role in research for the grant, I was invited by the NCCHW professional staff to be a central point of contact for the website development, keeping direction and community need synchronized, and allowing me to delve even further into new steps of this significant project.

Methods and Work Undertaken

Gaps and Improvement

The beginning of this project started with my research for the MOB grant in fall 2013. As a new employee for the NCCHW, Laurie Stradley assigned me my first big project to research gaps and areas for improvement for MOB programs in NC. I received an outline of research techniques for this task, starting with Maine, the state that leads the way in MOB implementation. Having no experience with falls prevention programs, or what the concept truly meant, much of the initial research I conducted was getting myself up to speed, and creating a baseline of what to look for. The following research involved online searches for states that have MOB, funding for their programs, differences between those states and NC MOB including how/where it is advertised and by whom, as well as what other falls prevention structures/programs are in place across the nation that could be examples for NC.

I compiled and organized these data, with an emphasis on NC MOB gaps and areas for improvement. Research on these elements continued through December 2013, until it was added to the grant by NCCHW for final submission.

Stakeholder Meeting

We held an MOB stakeholder meeting on October 18, 2013 in Buncombe County in order to get feedback from coaches and master trainers, providing another dimension of research for the grant. As note taker for the meeting, hearing first hand from community members, I was able to incorporate points of the discussion into research on gaps and improvements. The following five questions represent the topics covered during this stakeholder meeting:
- What are some of the positive aspects of offering and implementing A Matter of Balance?
- What support systems and resources have been useful to you in planning, coordinating or implementing A Matter of Balance?
- What do you see as gaps in the support you or your organization have received relative to A Matter of Balance?
- As you think about continuing your role (or the role of your organization) in A Matter of Balance, what support or resources would help ensure continuation and growth of the program?
- Is there anything else about A Matter of Balance that you would like to share?

This meeting provided an inclusive and safe environment for all those involved to voice their opinions or concerns, which in turn, shaped the project for the better, and developed my understanding of needs even further. Sparking new direction for the grant, this meeting

introduced an overarching theme of more connection with one another within the MOB programs. In addition, questions about how to reach more community members with this program were raised, which would be addressed and answered with an informational NC-based website for people to find online.

Survey Monkey provides a simple service that passes along surveys to designated parties and collects information in an efficient fashion. In order to determine the number of active master trainers in NC, I created and implemented a survey generated with this service.

Though there were around 50 registered master trainers in North Carolina, the list was outdated, without a central contact to update it, and had to be accessed through Maine Health's webpage. In response to this, the NCCHW asked that I create a survey through survey monkey to send to listed trainers, and update the list with active/inactive statuses. 10 email domains provided as contact for these trainers were no longer in existence, indicating that this list was more than a couple years old. Within two weeks of the survey being emailed and spread to the trainers, 40% of those who responded said they were no longer active and would not be continuing training. The survey provided yet another indication of need for a centralized method of communication between trainers and coaches, which could allow simple updates such as to be quick and efficient.

Survey results were compiled over the course of 3 weeks, as master trainers were able to respond. These results were then compiled into an excel spreadsheet with active vs. inactive statues, and provided for the NCCHW's grant write-up by the beginning of December 2013. This survey was the final piece of my role in the grant write-up, and apart from editing/revising a draft of the grant, concluded my tasks for the fall semester.

NC MOB Website Development

All components of the final draft of the draft were considered, consolidated, and submitted by Laurie Stradley in December 2013. The grant was successful and approved in early January 2014, securing funds, and providing new opportunity to improve NC MOB Programs. Considering the research, stakeholder meetings, community input, data collection, and survey results, the NCCHW decided that a portion of the funds would be dedicated to creating an interactive website for NC MOB. The first major step required for this task was hiring a professional web developer. In order to do this and ensure that the right person was hired, a few things needed to happen, starting with making a website 'wish list'.

Due to my role in the research portion of the grant, the NCCHW decided that I would be the right person to draft a list of items to be part of the website, which would include all ideal possibilities. I began this work in February 2014 by going back through the final MOB draft and piecing together some of the needs and gaps that NC faced in their programming. Though I had conducted a portion of the research, 3 months had already passed, and I needed to be certain about ideas for the website. Next, I went through all of my own notes and documents that I had summarized for the grant, and began matching items with website possibilities. Notes then extended these ideas from the stakeholder meeting, as well as from the master trainer survey results.

Ideas for transferring needs and gaps to a website wish list were primarily drawn from the previously mentioned resources, but researching example websites that are already in place was particularly helpful. Not only did they provide new ideas, but also gave me visuals of what to aim for, as well as what to exclude. Once all elements were put together for a first draft, screen shots of these website examples were also provided on the document for visual assistance. This draft was then passed to Laurie Stradley for edits, which included the following priority features:

- Active/inactive status for each master trainers
- Calendar/schedule of upcoming events/classes
- Map of NC with MOB master trainer sites, as well class location history
- Logging forms for classes: feature for coaches and master trainers
- Informative resources page for interested parties
- Interactive page to implement communication between coaches and master trainers

This list only includes a few features, in order to avoid repetition. Minor revisions and updates were made to include all ideal possibilities for the website. This list was then sent to various stakeholders to confirm content, and used to facilitate hiring the most suitable web designer.

At the time of writing this paper, additional methods/intentions of this project could not be completed. There are a lot of people involved with this project, as well as grant money that must be spent wisely, making decisions and movement challenging. After the website 'wish list' is confirmed by all parties, meetings and interviews with different web designers will follow, keeping the items on the list in mind. Once the web designer is hired, I will be consistently reviewing material in order to inform the web developer of the right direction for the website. Constant contact will be kept with him/her, and I will be reporting to both Laurie Stradley and my faculty advisor, Ameena Batada, for further guidance.

The next steps will include working on an interactive registration for statewide MOB classes, as well as an updated list of when classes will take place. Data entry online, rather than on paper, is a key component of the website for coaches and master trainers, so ensuring this component of the website will be particularly important. I will then plan to meet and/or conference with other community members who are involved with the MOB grant, in order to get further feedback on progress. Pretesting the website with community partners will then take place. Once revisions and updates are made, with the confirmation of completion from all those involved, the website will go live.

Ties to Academia

Preparation for this project stems from many areas of experience and exposure at this University. As a Health and Wellness Promotion (HWP) major, the majority of my learning has been focused on methods of promoting health through multiple facets. HWP curriculum also integrates opportunities to work on different service learning projects with focus on encouraging the health of community members in different ways. By definition, most community engaged projects promote the health of community members in more than one way, which made me very fortunate and appreciate to have previously practiced basics before starting this project.

The foundations of Health Communication, a course in the HWP Department, have been integrated throughout this project. This course is designed to prepare students for many areas of communication they may face in health settings, as well as put them into groups for work on a real world project to put learning into practice. Working with six different people on a community project was a difficult task, but a necessary exposure that gave us all perspective. When there are multiple people with different educational backgrounds and opinions, collaborating in an effective and timely way is not simple. I learned to communicate in various settings, making academic classroom connections with real world challenges through a community-oriented project. This experience prepared me for the work and communication with health professionals and community members of varying ages involved with this larger scale MOB project.

The HWP curriculum incorporates two service-learning designated courses, including the Introduction to Health Promotion course, where I was put into a group and worked on a community-oriented service project for the majority of the semester. My group worked with Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry's (ABCCM) Veteran Restoration Quarters to create a 'how-to' booklet for Veterans to gain computer skills in their onsite computer lab. This booklet incorporated a variety of skills, ranging from basic operation, to creating a CV and searching/applying for jobs, and was catered to the needs that our ABCCM contact proposed. Working through this service learning project was eye opening to the needs of our community, and was an opportunity for my group to create a valuable utensil for Veterans that would encourage their health from more than one aspect. Developing an extensive, accurate, and evidence-based guide was certainly the largest product that I had ever constructed, particularly with a group. During the process, we dealt with many communication difficulties between our community partner, as well as Veterans themselves, which was an important lesson in time management, and a further test of health communication skills gained in the classroom. Every step of this service-learning course provided insight that carried over into my work these past few months.

Statistical understanding can benefit research of any kind, and the research I conducted was no different. When researching results of studies that were conducted on MOB program effectiveness, significance between variables was often presented statistically by null hypothesis and 'P' values. If I had not taken a statistics course, I would have been unaware of how to interpret the results that were presented, and could have made unnecessary mistakes. Not only did statistics prepare me for analysis of results, but also gave me an understanding of how to conduct research myself. Comparing variables, projecting significance vs. no significance, creating graphs of correlations, all gave me an advantage when looking through research studies for NC MOB gaps in comparison to other states' programming.

Though this community health project is particularly focused on health, it wasn't just my HWP courses that tied into this project. UNCA puts emphasis on interdisciplinary studying, creating a well-rounded education for all students. As I was faced with courses in humanities, biology, sociology, psychology, anthropology, chemistry, history, etc., I developed associations between many subjects, encouraging my critical thinking skills, and constantly tying academia to everyday life. Education in cross disciplines also allowed me to remain open minded to new experiences of learning, and in turn, contributed greatly to my work with this MOB project.

Preparation in different academic settings influences efficiency in balancing work and learning, and I did not go a single day during this project without gratefully utilizing these cross-discipline experiences. When research statistics on falls prevention could have been interpreted as only touching one aspect of life, these courses prepared me to recognize the additional effects that may have gone unnoticed, and ultimately making my work much more accurate.

In the summer of 2013, I was able to complete an internship with Western North Carolina Health Network (WNCHN), working closely with the Director of Programs. The WNCHN takes a unique approach to public health, uniting 17 hospitals across 16 counties in Western NC, making it one of the most valuable places for me to gain experience in a professional environment. I began my time with basic research on the Network itself, as well as the regional health approach, trying to understand the multi-dimensional approach to preventative health that was being incorporated, and where I would fit into the big picture. Though this didn't count as official research, it took time and research effort that was new to me, which was educational the entire summer. Professionalism was also gained by my time at WNCHN, which made my transition to NCCHW much easier. Though I had held many jobs prior to this internship, professionalism in my desired field was new to me, and took adjustments. As petty as it may seem, holding my own without feeling uncomfortable in dress clothes on a daily basis was difficult at first, but even such a minor thing made a significant contribution to my mentality during this MOB project. In addition, most of the tasks I performed at WNCHN was my first time doing so, including playing minor roles in stakeholder meetings, taking minutes, drafting agendas, minor research for projects, traveling to conferences, and sitting in on a hospital CEO proposal. I was exposed to a variety of situations where I was able to put classroom learning into practice, and gained confidence at playing a part in a professional health environment. Without this experience, my confidence with this NC MOB project would be lacking, and skills would certainly have been sub-par.

Challenges Faced and Responses to those Challenges

Though this project started in the fall of 2013 with grant research, the process of actually creating a successful interactive website takes a significant amount of time, and so this project's success was limited by the time frame. Every step of a large-scale project takes more time than expected to complete, and so intended goals of this project were simply constrained by the time I had to work with. There were many pieces of the puzzle making contributions to this project, and aligning them in a way to meet everyone's expectations, as well as successfully filling the needs of all parties involved, is not easy. The NCCHW balances many projects on a daily basis, and must stay in constant communication with a large number of other organizations and groups to take certain actions, which makes any scheduling and movement harder than I initially expected it to be. For this project, grant money was also involved, which made hiring a web designer a longer process to ensure that funds were being well spent.

When many people are involved in a project, I learned that consistent communication is difficult to maintain, especially when each person is balancing different obligations. Emails may be sent, and calls may be made, but answers are not always possible in a timely manor. I was aware of the pace that public health projects can take from my internship experience, but the timeline for this community project was more stressful than I expected. In order to adapt, I had to accept the

possibility that not all goals would be met by the end of the semester, and that I needed to focus on the tasks that were available to me. The NCCHW does an incredible job managing and progressing health projects for this state, making them the experts on when and how to proceed. There was no reason to think too hard about the timeline, because the decisions were always in much more experienced and smarter hands than mine.

Using Survey Monkey to obtain active versus inactive statuses from master trainers was a new challenge for me. First of all, as previously mentioned, the domains of 10 contact's emails were no longer in existence from being outdated, meaning more time for Laurie Stradley and myself to search their new emails, and send the surveys to the correct people. The initial survey I created did not include the contact names of those who responded, which meant I had no record of who responded, and who didn't, only the number of responders. I reformatted the survey to include contact information, but sending the new survey to everyone again, including those who responded, confused a couple and wasted everyone's time. This was my first time using Survey Monkey, but adapting to the format just took some trial and error to fully grasp.

Writing up the final report for this project was easily the most challenging aspect of the entire project for me. I've thoroughly enjoyed the learning experiences from obstacles that have been a part of this project, but writing a final report without the initially intended goals completed was strenuous. When steps were still in motion but the deadline for completing the report was close, I became anxious about what to include and how to summarize something that felt incomplete. It was my first time writing a lengthy, formal community designated report, and without the guidance and revisions from my project advisors, the quality of my content would have been unquestionably poor. Through this challenge, I learned how to manage formatting, structure, and even minor details of an official report, which in turn will assist any future professional write-ups I may encounter.

Personal Results

Exposure and integration into a professional work environment through this project development has allowed me to grow immensely. During my time with this project, I obtained invaluable expertise in research skills, project deliverables, and foundational methods for a community service project. Aside from the improvements with research ability and project formation, I gained maturation in health communication and professionalism. I have a newfound comfort with taking on pieces of projects that would have felt overwhelming in the past, gaining the ability to interact confidently and efficiently with stakeholders. Though I had an internship with WNCHN before starting this project, my time there was limited, and I had a longer involvement with NCCHW to find my place and work closely with a project for an extended period of time.

I now have an understanding of what it takes for community projects to be initiated, and the many levels of progress that must be achieved in order to have well-rounded completion of goals. Without the experts in organizations like NCCHW giving structure and opportunity to the voices of our community members, health related service projects would be much more difficult to complete. I find myself thinking often about the MOB steps of falls prevention that older adults can be taking, and I feel like a helpful asset to this community. Researching gaps and needs in NC MOB has given me perspective on what is available to the older adults of this state, and

allowed me to put time and energy into making an interactive website with their needs in mind. The skills gained from this involvement will certainly be transferrable to the future in health and wellness.

Organizational (NCCHW) and Community Results

Upon completion of the steps that were within the available timeframe, the NCCHW successfully responded and acted on community need, giving older adults in NC a better chance to not only promote their own health, but the health of their peers through falls prevention efforts. Researching the needs and gaps in the leading falls prevention program, MOB, provided the NCCHW with awareness of what is available to the community members in terms of fall prevention efforts, and what improvements could be made. In response to community need, the NCCHW successfully wrote a grant for NC MOB, securing funds from Blue Cross that was put into creating a much-needed utility. Though the website was unable to be completed in accordance with this report's due date, the necessary steps are in motion, and it will be live for NC in the near future.

Though the NCCHW already had it, this organization secured relationships and trust with community members through the work they have done in this project. The website may not be online, but the NCCHW has every intention of doing so as efficiently as possible, and the community has been a part of the process from day one.

Community members and those involved with NC MOB feel taken care, and happy to have taken a significant role in assisting the NCCHW with planning and execution of the website. Voices were heard from participants, coaches, and master trainers, making important note of needs from numerous levels of the program.

Sustainability

Continuing the growth of NC MOB is extremely important for a program that is still evolving, particularly for one that reaches all corners of the state. By finding new ways to stay connected, large-scale programs like MOB are able to remain operational in an efficient fashion. Websites make connections like this possible, with constant information available online 24/7. Establishing the NC MOB website opens up new potential for innovative ways to progress program implementation, as well as providing the foundation for newcomers. In addition, this website will quickly become the state's informative hub for MOB, and a major step towards eliminating gaps in services.

In order for this project to be considered a success, and continue growth for MOB programs in NC, I recommend that the website have a host that will do its best to keep the main program components at heart, and manage it in a way that strives to reduce gaps in service. If data is not updated, and communication is not maintained at a high proficiency, community members will not be receiving accurate and timely resources that facilitate the progression of their health. Sustaining the integrity of this project relies on the relationships with community members involved, and continuing this bond will ensure proper direction for the future.

As coaches and master trainers experience new interaction with one another across the state, sustainability of this website will grow as new thoughts and ideas are generated from the relationships that are built. Even those members who are in the most rural parts of the state will have opportunity to reach out to others, supporting the unification that this project aimed for.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) has expressed interest in becoming the host of the NC MOB website and programming, which will be mean major success for this project. Having a host, and particularly one that is part of the UNC system, provides a focal point for communication that is key to providing fluidity for the state. Steps will be in progress this summer, 2014, to work closely with UNCG and provide an easy transition. If things continue on course, UNCG may be the host of the NC MOB website by the fall of this year.

Conclusion

This project lifts a major weight off the shoulders of all those involved in MOB, providing an interactive website that ensures easier registration, communication, reduced costs, and consolidation of information for all users. Though it was a somewhat long process, this demonstrates the necessary steps that are involved with a community-based project from beginning to (almost) end, and what it takes to produce something worthwhile that can be sustained. Community members' needs were successfully identified, and the NCCHW acted on them accordingly to reduce those needs.

Community engagement wouldn't be possible without the roles of organizations like the NCCHW leading the way. Prior to my time with them, I knew public health initiatives were important to me, but didn't understand the many layers that entail a successful organization. This organization in particular has a huge responsibility to represent the state of NC with numerous projects every month, but every person involved is dedicated to preventative health for community members and the state as a whole. I saw firsthand the commitment to making valuable changes that this organization has, which gave me new energy to take part in more service learning ventures. Without these individuals pioneering the way on a daily basis, and rarely getting the thanks they deserve, the projects like this one would be significantly less efficient in reducing the gaps in NC health programs.

Research for the grant showed me that there are always ways in which states can improve their programs. In terms of MOB, Maine is undeniably the leading state in program implementation, and understanding their breakthroughs, along with other states' techniques, made for a well-rounded research study that was beneficial for comparison to NC. When first assigned the role of researching gaps and needs, I didn't know how to start, but finding success of other states gave me direction, and in turn, gave the state of NC direction as well. I learned that community collaboration efforts could stem from much larger examples across the nation.

Overall, community members and all those involved with NC MOB programming, are satisfied with the results of this project, and know that the NCCHW will follow through with the final product website. The time allotted for completion was simply not suited for the nature of this extensive project, which involved grant money and numerous stakeholders, and I was unable to see it through to the end. My time with the NCCHW does not end here though, as I will be

staying with the organization through the summer of 2014, and will likely continue my role with the website designer soon.

Through working closely with the NCCHW, I have been exposed to the hard work, dedication, and patience that is necessary to progress a project with many stakeholders, and to do so in a professional, efficient manor. It's one thing to learn the promotional health methods in a classroom, and an entirely different experience being in an environment that puts classroom learning to the test. I believe that opportunities like this can only be beneficial to students, providing an educational outlet that commits learned material to long-term memory, and I encourage every student to take part in a service-learning experience. These skills will pass over to future health promotion endeavors I may be involved in, and allow me to begin with a thorough understanding of what's to come.

The experience of this project has given me more perspective on the field of health than I could ever have predicted, which will be incredibly advantageous as I begin my career in health promotion. Service learning has allowed me to form a new understanding of what it means to take part in a community project, and I truly feel like I've done something worthwhile A Matter of Balance in North Carolina. We have an obligation to engage, listen, and act on the needs of our community members, and I have been fortunate enough to gain this insight through an invaluable service learning experience.

Appendix
A Matter of Balance Lay-Leader Model

A MATTER OF
BALANCE
MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

Lead Trainers

TRAIN

Master Trainers

TWO DAY TRAINING

TRAIN

Coaches

AT MASTER TRAINER SITES
TWO 4-HOUR CLASSES

LEAD

A Matter of Balance Class

TO 8–12 PARTICIPANTS
EIGHT 2-HOUR SESSIONS

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