

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

October 7, 2010

Michigan State University is proud to partner with Community Connections of West Virginia and the Community Anti- Drug Coalitions of America on the 2010-2011 National Youth Leadership Initiative. As part of this project, participants will learn participatory action research techniques including how to use images to tell a story, how to collect and analyze data, and how to engage in critical reflection and dialogue. Using the data they have collected and analyzed, youth will then be given instruction in the making of one of three communication products: website development, digital storytelling, and the design of a photography installation (such as those found in museums).

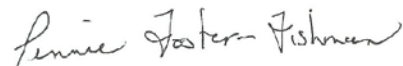
The instructional model for this project was designed by senior faculty at Michigan State University and is based on existing college courses in their degree programs. Indeed, the instructional component of this project is equivalent to a 3-credit college experience. In exchange for successful completion of this component of the project, participating students will be issued a certificate by Michigan State University worth a one-time \$3,000 scholarship for those who attend MSU for college. This certificate of completion from MSU can also be used when applying to other colleges and universities as evidence of completion of college-level work.

The course-based model designed for this project incorporates content from photography, applied research, community psychology, and communication courses. Session content will cover qualitative research methods, basic photography techniques, and basic communication theory and then provide instruction focused on each of the communication products. At residential sessions, instruction will be led by MSU faculty and their graduate students. In between the residential sessions, distance learning technologies will be used to tutor and mentor students as they work through the instructional content. That mentoring and tutoring will be provided by MSU graduate and undergraduate students.

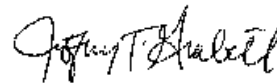
We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with youth in West Virginia. The opportunity to engage in college-level work, with proper mentoring and support to ensure success, should serve these youth well in their completion of high school coursework and in their pursuit of higher education. In addition, research has demonstrated that youth engaged in PhotoVoice become empowered, feel more capable, and are more likely to take action to pursue their dreams.

We look forward to getting to know the wonderful young people from your community.

Sincerely,



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