

Press Release

Media Contact

ALICE CARLE (585) 327-6360; acarle@cgr.org

CGR Completes Two Studies of Nonprofit Capacity Building Needs and Assets in Western and Central New York

Projects identify needs, assets and suggestions for strengthening nonprofit organizations

Rochester, N.Y., September 19, 2019 — CGR is pleased to announce the completion of two studies of the capacity building needs and assets of the nonprofit organizations in Western New York and Central New York. Funded by the [Western New York Nonprofit Support Group](#), the Western New York study focuses on a nine-county region. The Central New York study was funded by the [Health Foundation for Western and Central New York](#) and covers an eight-county region.

For both studies, CGR partnered with [Community Health Worker Network of Buffalo](#), (soon to be called CoNECT- Community Network for Engagement, Connection and Transformation) a support organization providing education, networking, and support to ensure all people and communities have the resources and power they need to realize their full potential for health and well-being, with a focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity.

The study included best-practice research, nonprofit surveys, interviews with nonprofit leaders and support organizations, and a series of focus groups throughout both geographies. Special emphasis was placed on capturing and highlighting the voices of smaller, grass-roots and rural groups that often do not have access to traditional capacity building resources, and the study design drew on principles and practices from community-based participatory research in which the nonprofit community helped to frame the study.

Deliverables included two written reports and two interactive “maps” that visually represent the assets and gaps identified by study participants.

- The WNY report can be [found here](#) and the WNY [interactive map](#) can be found here.
- The CNY report can be [found here](#) and the CNY [interactive map](#) can be found here.

Capacity building challenges in both studies included fundraising and development, marketing and communications, board governance, recruiting and retaining diverse staff and board members, and using data for evaluation and strategic learning. Assets included dedicated staff, networks of support, and grass-roots organizations' ability to authentically engage community. The project also identifies participant-generated ideas for addressing capacity building needs. Data in the WNY report and interactive map serves as a tool for the WNYNSG to inform planning and collaboration among their foundation members. Data in the CNY report and map serve to inform the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York as well as other regional funders interested in strengthening the capacity of nonprofits in their communities.

"The Western New York Nonprofit Support Group is committed to building on the many capacity building efforts that are already ongoing and filling gaps that are not currently being addressed," said Katie Pieri, WNYNSG Director. "We are also committed to bringing community voice into our planning and strategy development. This report and map will help us to engage the nonprofit community and to inform our work going forward." The WNYNSG is comprised of the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, the John R. Oishei Foundation, the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, the Western New York Foundation, and two independent consultants.

"As a member of the WNYNSG that also works in Central New York, we thought it important to replicate the study in Central New York to ensure we heard from all of our stakeholders," said Nora OBrien-Suric, Ph.D., President of the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York. "We look forward to using this study to inform our work in both geographies and to sharing this with our Central New York colleagues."

"CGR is pleased to have had the opportunity to leverage its expertise in quantitative and qualitative data analysis and visual mapping in the realm of nonprofit capacity building," says Project Director Alice Carle of CGR. "We were especially pleased to work with the Community Health Worker Network of Buffalo/CoNECT to help ensure that we reached diverse voices. The tools created for the Western New York Nonprofit Support Group and the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York have the potential to inform those interested in strengthening the nonprofit sector in Western and Central New York and in other communities as well."

About CGR

Founded in 1915, CGR is an independent, nonprofit management consulting organization delivering expertise in government and education, economics and public finance, health and human services, and nonprofits and communities. Our mission is to improve the quality of communities through impactful research, analysis, consultation and data management for the public, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations that serve them. To learn more, visit www.cgr.org.