



Reinforcing Agency

A Collaborative Approach to Achieving Economic Empowerment in the West Ward

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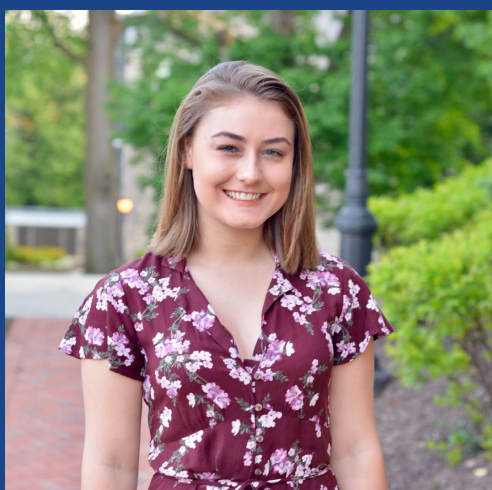
MEET THE TEAM

Meet the Team



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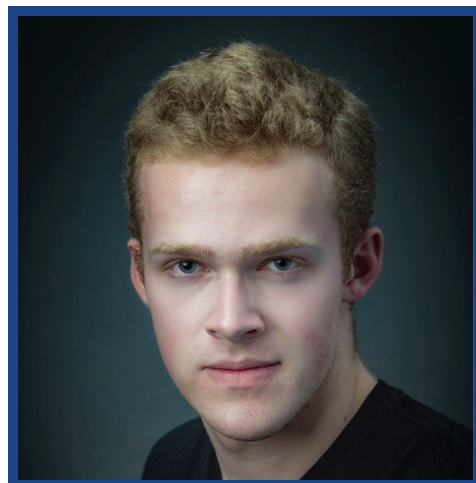
Meet the Team

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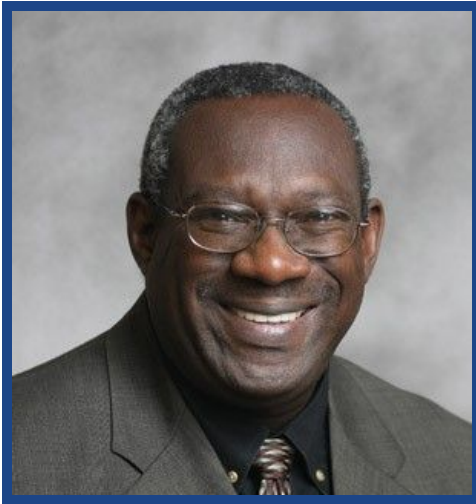


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What the Technology Clinic Is:

“Technology Clinic is a two-semester program in which teams of students from each academic division work together on imaginative solutions to real-world problems for clients.

The students are nominated by professors and former Tech Clinic students and mentored by two faculty facilitators. Project teams are purposely multidisciplinary and include students and faculty mentors from the Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences and Engineering. To encourage “out-of-the-box” thinking we have no requirements for prior experience, thus reducing incoming “prejudices” in order to encourage innovative solutions.”

“Freedom means that individuals are able to determine the sorts of lives they lead rather than having their lives determined for them.”

~ S. Abu Turab Rizvi

PREAMBLE

Preamble

This report is a compilation of our work this past semester and the ideas we have brainstormed thus far. This report includes the work we have produced in the first stage of our project. The end goal of this project is to design a five year plan for Lafayette College's future Technology Clinics that focus on reinforcing agency within the West Ward community. Since this is only our midyear report, we have the opportunity to actively expand upon what we have accomplished so far.

We look forward to building upon the Great Easton Development Partnership's West Ward Neighborhood Plan. This plan is the foundation of our project and has identified important areas that need the community's attention. As students with much to learn from this project, we rise to the challenges the GEDP has faced. Centrally, our focus is the challenge of stirring civil engagement and community participation. As a result, we have been inspired to compliment the GEDP Plan by taking a human centric approach, with the West Ward community at the forefront of change.

OUR CHARGE

Our Charge

From start to finish, the Tech Clinic project in the West Ward will assume a human-centric approach. Economic empowerment is only possible if the community members are consistently at the forefront since they are the critical stakeholders in change.

Therefore, all potential changes to the West Ward must be implemented through community collaboration. Our project seeks an in-depth comprehension of what the community views to be assets. This requires an understanding of what the community aspires to build upon. All ideas for projects must be viewed as necessary and important to the residents of the West Ward. Support from the residents for the initiatives is crucial in order to elicit long-term benefits for the community as a whole.

PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

Project Significance

Each client that we had the opportunity to interact with provided us with a unique perspective on the possibilities of economic development in the West Ward. As we continue to discover everything the West Ward has to offer, we must first clarify why this is important to each of our clients.

Why Does This Matter?

For West Ward Residents:

- The residents of the West Ward are what make up the community and best understand the complexities of living in the West Ward with all of its benefits and struggles. Therefore, collaboration focusing on the community's voice and agency is essential to achieving economic empowerment in the West Ward.

For the GEDP:

- As the organization spearheading this initiative in the West Ward, the GEDP's focus on community engagement and neighborhood improvement is quintessential to the goal of economic development in the West Ward.

For the City of Easton:

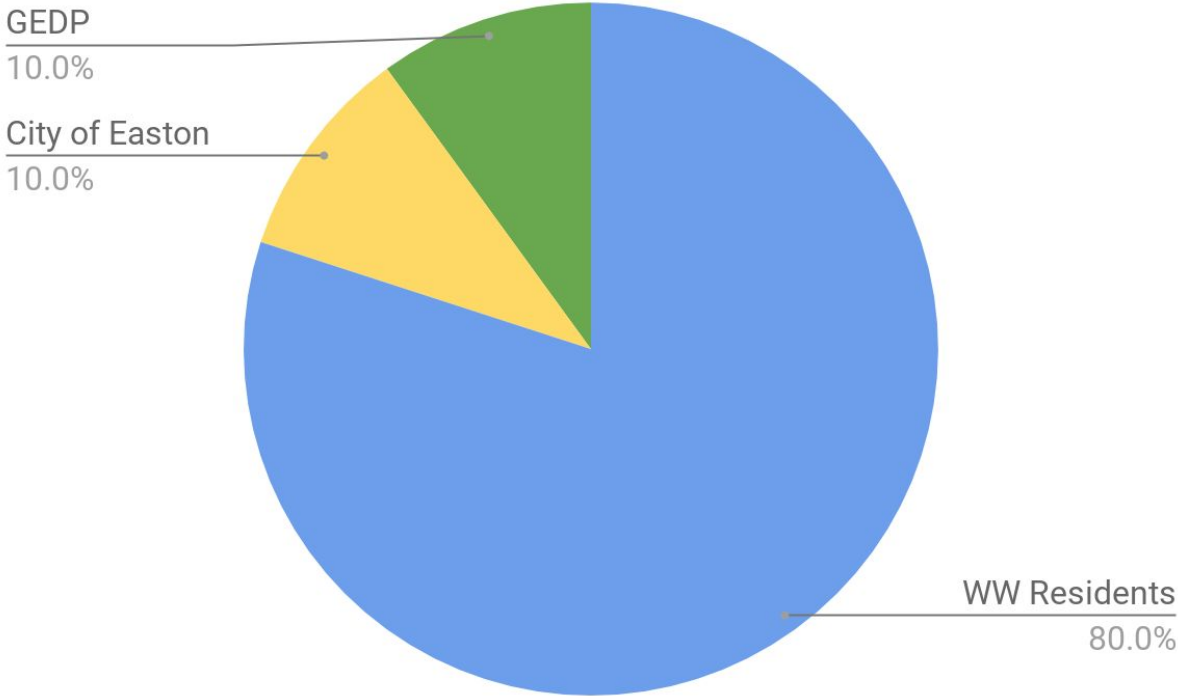
- As the West Ward is an integrated part of the City of Easton, economic empowerment in the West Ward means economic empowerment for Easton. The success of the rejuvenation of downtown Easton through the Main Street Initiative has strengthened community and economic development through a selection of restaurants and activities. Emulating this success in the West Ward would only improve the overall economic development in Easton.

Project Significance: POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES

We have identified three groups of people we see as potential beneficiaries for this project:

- 1. The Residents of the West Ward
- 2. The City of Easton
- 3. The Greater Easton Development Partnership

The distribution of influence that those beneficiaries have on the design of our project is unequal. Because of our initiative to reinforce and provoke agency within the community members of the West Ward, the residents of neighborhood have a much more significant role in our project. The distribution of influence is as follows:



Project Significance: DEMOGRAPHICS DATA

Census and related data is important to understanding the character of an area. We've made it clear that our primary source of information about the West Ward comes directly from the residents and on the ground research. However, statistical data is just as important and impactful when constructing a report. The data found in Figures I-IV is sourced from the American Community Survey 2017 5-Year Estimates. Census Tracts 142 and 143 comprise the West Ward, which is understood to be the area bordered in the North by the Bushkill Creek, in the East by 6th Street, in the South by the Lehigh River, and in the West by 16th Street.

We begin with Figure I, a spread of the ages of the residents. We immediately see the largest chunk lies in 25 to 34 range at 17.4%. By contrast, this number is 13.7% for the United States as a whole. 10.9% are between the ages of 18 and 24 (9.7% nationwide). Thus we see the West Ward exhibits a slightly younger tilt than the nationwide distribution. This is an asset for the community because entrepreneurship and economic and social growth are typically associated with younger community members.

Figure II expounds the rent prices of housing units with cash rent.

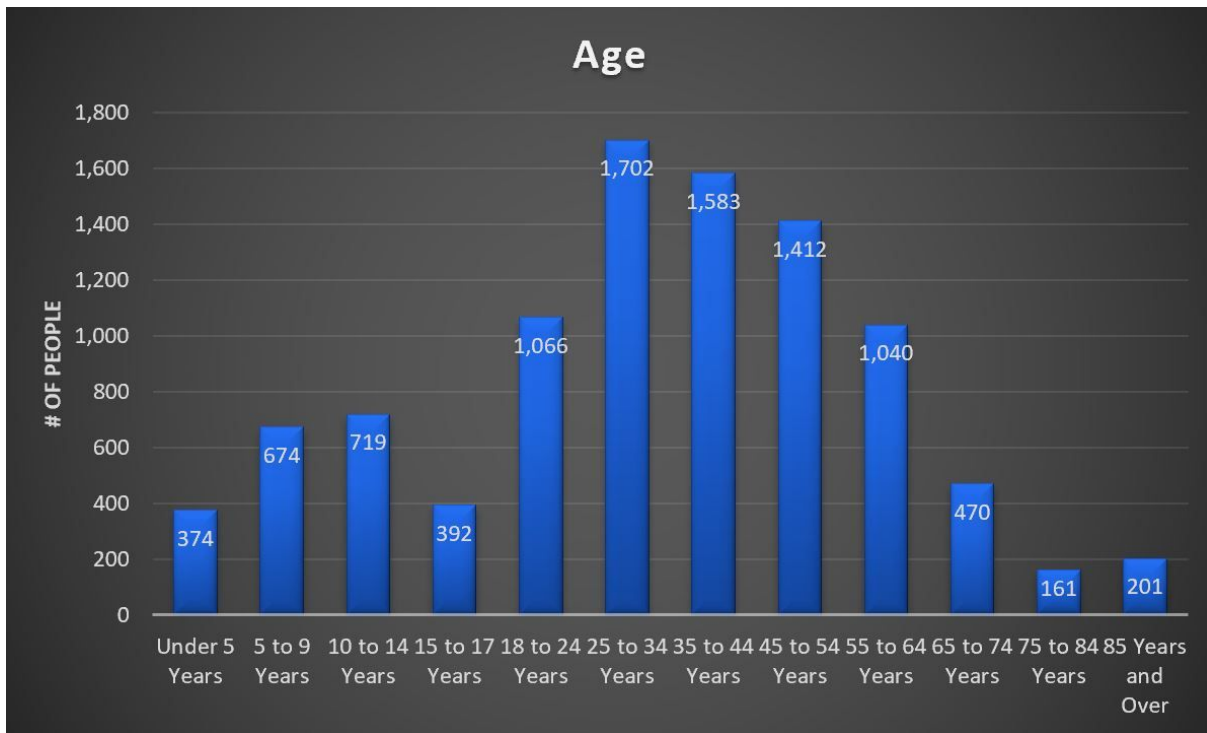


Figure I - Age Distribution for the combined Census Tracts 142 and 143 from the ACS 2017 5-year estimates

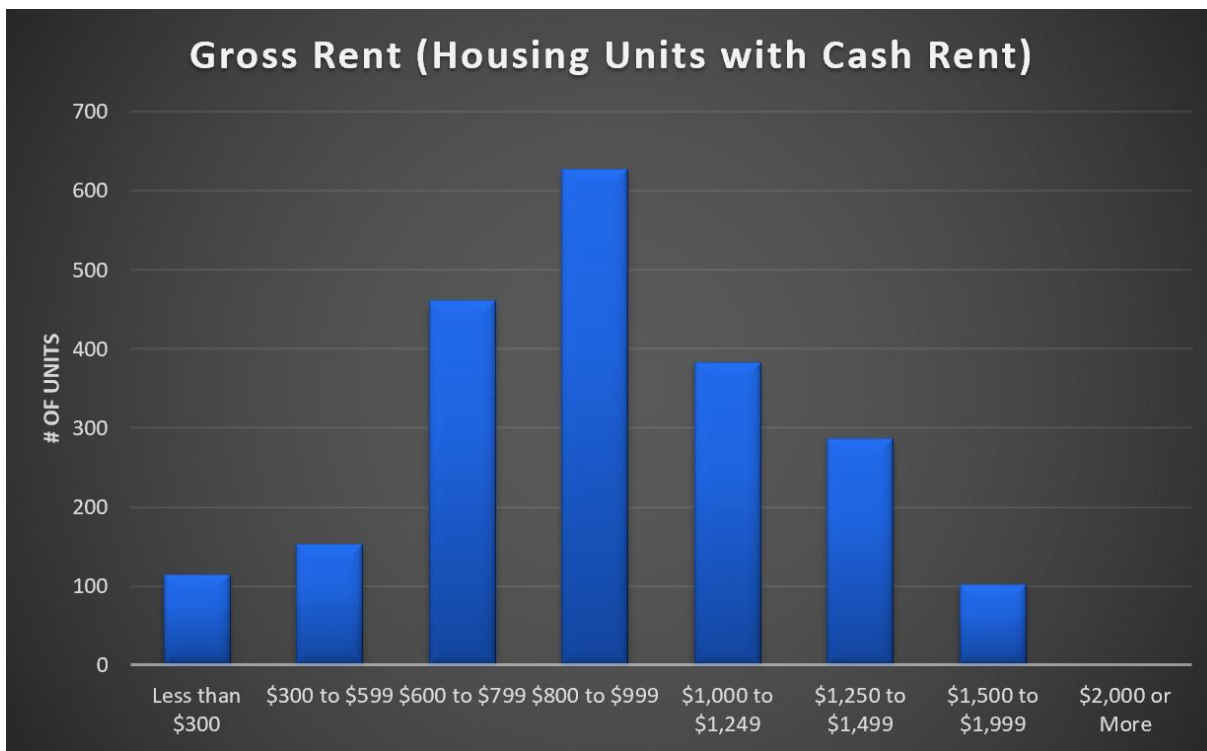


Figure II - Rent Distribution for the combined Census Tracts 142 and 143 from the ACS 2017 5-year estimates

 **Population: 9,893**

 **Civilian Population 16 to 19 Years: 600**

 **Land Area: 0.96 square miles**

 **Average Household Size: 2.5**

 **Housing Units: 4,350**

 **Renter-Occupied Housing Units with Cash Rent: 2,125**

 **Owner-Occupied Housing Units: 1,430**

 **Dropped out: 6.2%**

 **Unemployment Rate for Civilian Population in Labor Force
16 Years and Over: 10.5%**

 **Foreign-Born Population: 1,607**

Census Tracts 142 and 143 comprise the West Ward, Census Tract 144 is colloquially known as “Downtown” and Census Tract 141 “College Hill”:

ACS 2017 (5-Year Estimates)						
Statistics	Census Tract 141, Northampton County, Pennsylvania	Census Tract 142, Northampton County, Pennsylvania	Census Tract 143, Northampton County, Pennsylvania	Census Tract 144, Northampton County, Pennsylvania	TOTAL (All Selected Census Tracts)	
SE:A00001. Total Population						
Total Population	5,952	5,973	3,821	2,248	17,994	
SE:A00002. Population Density (Per Sq. Mile)						
Total Population	5,952	5,973	3,821	2,248	17,994	
Population Density (Per Sq. Mile)	5,173.4	12,449.4	9,169.8	7,036.5	7,603.8	
Area (Land)	1.15	0.48	0.42	0.32	2.37	
SE:A02001. Sex						
Total Population:	5,952	5,973	3,821	2,248	17,994	
Male	3,113	2,967	2,158	1,038	46.2%	9,276 51.6%
Female	2,839	3,006	1,663	1,210	53.8%	8,718 48.5%
SE:A01001. Age						
Total Population:	5,952	5,973	3,821	2,248	17,994	
Under 5 Years	268	302	72	22	4.5%	664 3.7%
5 to 9 Years	206	402	272	96	3.5%	976 5.4%
10 to 14 Years	280	563	156	85	4.7%	1,084 6.0%
15 to 17 Years	122	266	126	59	2.1%	573 3.2%
18 to 24 Years	2,448	568	498	185	41.1%	3,699 20.6%
25 to 34 Years	519	878	824	235	8.7%	2,456 13.7%
35 to 44 Years	602	950	633	253	10.1%	2,438 13.6%
45 to 54 Years	409	929	483	261	6.9%	2,082 11.6%
55 to 64 Years	567	510	530	361	9.5%	1,968 10.9%
65 to 74 Years	370	318	152	226	6.2%	1,066 5.9%
75 to 84 Years	122	92	69	223	2.1%	506 2.8%
85 Years and Over	39	195	6	242	0.7%	482 2.7%
SE:A03001. Race						
Total Population:	5,952	5,973	3,821	2,248	17,994	
White Alone	4,827	3,859	2,112	1,904	81.1%	12,702 70.6%
Black or African American Alone	368	868	1,052	117	6.2%	2,405 13.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	0	335	0	0	0.0%	335 1.9%
Asian Alone	341	223	103	28	5.7%	695 3.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0 0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	57	285	339	81	1.0%	762 4.2%
Two or More Races	359	403	215	118	6.0%	1,095 6.1%
SE:A10008. Households by Household Type						
Households:	1,424	2,229	1,378	1,169	6,200	
Family Households:	954	1,339	793	315	67.0%	3,401 54.9%
Married-Couple Family	810	851	410	236	56.9%	2,307 37.2%
Other Family:	144	488	383	79	10.1%	1,094 17.7%
Male Householder, No Wife Present	50	85	61	19	3.5%	215 3.5%
Female Householder, No Husband	94	403	322	60	6.6%	879 14.2%
Nonfamily Households:	470	890	585	854	33.0%	2,799 45.2%
Male Householder	227	275	371	386	15.9%	1,259 20.3%
Female Householder	243	615	214	468	17.1%	1,540 24.8%
SE:A14006. Median Household Income (In 2017 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)						
Median Household Income (In 2017 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)	\$84,318	\$32,598	\$38,819	\$32,535	\$45,629	
SE:A10001. Housing Units						
Housing Units	1,612	2,694	1,656	1,469	7,431	
SE:A10060. Tenure						
Occupied Housing Units:	1,424	2,229	1,378	1,169	6,200	
Owner Occupied	876	917	513	182	61.5%	2,488 40.1%
Renter Occupied	548	1,312	865	987	38.5%	3,712 59.9%
SE:B13004. Ratio of Income in to Poverty Level (Summarized)						
Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined:	3,556	5,823	3,133	2,063	14,575	
Under 1.00 (Doing Poorly)	236	1,763	592	358	6.6%	2,949 20.2%
1.00 to 1.99 (Struggling)	210	1,457	906	514	5.9%	3,087 21.2%
Under 2.00 (Poor or Struggling)	446	3,220	1,498	872	12.5%	6,036 41.4%
2.00 and Over (Doing Ok)	3,110	2,603	1,635	1,191	87.5%	8,539 58.6%

BACKGROUND

Background

In the past 250 years, the American Story has been one of upward economic mobility and the overcoming of inequality through generational hard work and perseverance, especially immigrants. The American people have a fundamental understanding that inequality exists and there's nothing intrinsically wrong with this, provided there also exists **high mobility**. The American Story cautions the people in establishing Us vs. Them or Me vs. You scenarios, for ever present is the hope of one day transcending one's surroundings and reaching the apex of society. Americans are taught to fight poverty, unemployment, and homelessness as though each were its own individual or institution. Governmental agencies and policies protect economic freedoms from behind the veil of ignorance, enabling each individual in society to possess as close to equal social and economic opportunity from birth as possible.

The American Story is a wonderful ideology yet is rapidly degenerating in the modern era. **The economic mobility of the American Story does not exist anymore because although an individual can succeed anywhere, groups cannot and must be paired with an environment which facilitates each individual's ability to create and discover, to self-define success and achieve this success of their own volition. Therefore, the paramount prerogative in achieving economic mobility must be in creating this environment for one's own community.**

For some historical context, according to the West Ward Neighborhood Plan developed by the GEDP earlier this year, “Easton flourished until the second half of the 20th century, with the decline of industry, the effects post-World War II “urban renewal projects” and the rise of urban sprawl, the effects of which are still seen throughout the city and the West Ward today. Federal pressure to improve urban areas drove many of the middle- and upper-class residents to surrounding suburban developments. Today, the neighborhood faces challenges common to similar post-industrial communities, including crime, transience, skill deficiencies for the current job market and an aging housing stock.”

Easton has served as an industrial and cultural nexus for nearly 200 years and this history serves as the backdrop to status quo we find ourselves in today. It’s important to recognize this historical background as context when implementing new opportunities for growth within the West Ward.

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METHODOLOGY

Methodology

Our Mission:

We strive to communicate effectively with the entire West Ward community in order to grasp a thorough comprehension of what they view as assets within the community and areas in which they desire to build upon.

Our Approach:

To gain an adequate understanding of what the community as a whole needs and wants, we have been directly speaking to residents of the West Ward. The most efficient way we have found to gain contact to residents is through engaging ourselves with fundamental elements of the West Ward.

- ❖ We have eaten at restaurants
- ❖ Walked around the West Ward
- ❖ Spoken to Uber drivers
- ❖ Invited residents to meet with us both on and off of Lafayette's campus.

We have tried our best to reach out to a variety of West Ward community members. We are attempting to converse with all demographics of the community so that the feedback we collect is as representative of the West Ward as possible. We recognize the significance of interacting with all aspects of the

community, so that is our primary goal before we propose opportunities for engagement.

We plan on engaging on a deeper level with the West Ward during the summer and next semester through working with the Easton Area Community Center, Vegetables in the Community, and the Easton Area School District (Paxinosa Elementary School, in particular). As our project progresses, so will the forms of communication we have with the residents of the West Ward.

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RESEARCH

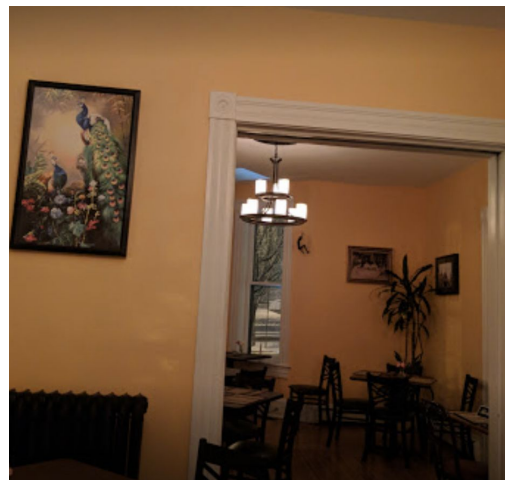
Research

Restaurant Observations

Ethnic Diversity:

- After speaking to residents, an exceptional aspect of the West Ward community that was highlighted is the diversity of residents in the community.
- The diversity within the members of the community extends into the diversity of foods that are made available to the whole community through family-owned restaurants.
- We personally experienced the unique array of cuisines in the West Ward by eating at both ethnically-authentic restaurants and at popularized cuisine restaurants.
- The following restaurants listed below in bold are those which we ate at over the course of this semester.

1. 1001 Thai:



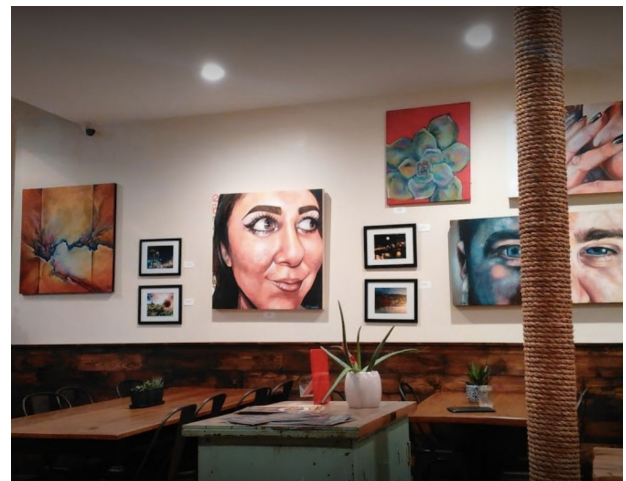
Established versus Newly Opened:

While Noto's Deli has been able to sustain itself for 16 years, Easton Taco and Rotisserie has been open for less than a year.

2. Noto's Deli:



3. Easton Taco and Rotisserie:



Atmosphere Comparisons

- Noto's Deli has limited seating and a counter where food is ordered and quickly delivered to the customer, while Easton Taco and Rotisserie has plentiful seating with tables long enough to accommodate large families.
- While sitting and eating in Noto's Deli, we were able to observe people in work clothes ordering food to go immediately. Nobody else sat down to eat when we ate at Noto's Deli.
- However, there was another family eating at Easton Taco and Rotisserie when we were there. Parents waited for their school-age child to enter the restaurant to eat with them.
- The close proximity to where the bus let the child off in relation to the location of the restaurant and where they live makes the restaurant easily accessible especially to neighboring families.
- The interior set-up of the restaurants is telling of the social capital in the West Ward. The customers we saw enter the restaurants while we were there is dependent on the day of the week and the time at which we ate there.
- Though this research is circumstantial, it is important to note that the atmosphere of the restaurant has the ability to either produce or not produce a conducive social environment.

- The set-up of Noto's Deli is indicative of their common customers who most likely stop there to quickly grab a meal after getting off of work and before heading off to other obligations, which may include a second job.
- Easton Taco and Rotisserie is set to accommodate families who sit down and indulge in the cuisine together, enabling them to make conversation throughout the meal and to build social capital.
- Noto's Deli is efficient for grab-and-go, but is not a conducive environment for social capital.

4. El Super Taco:

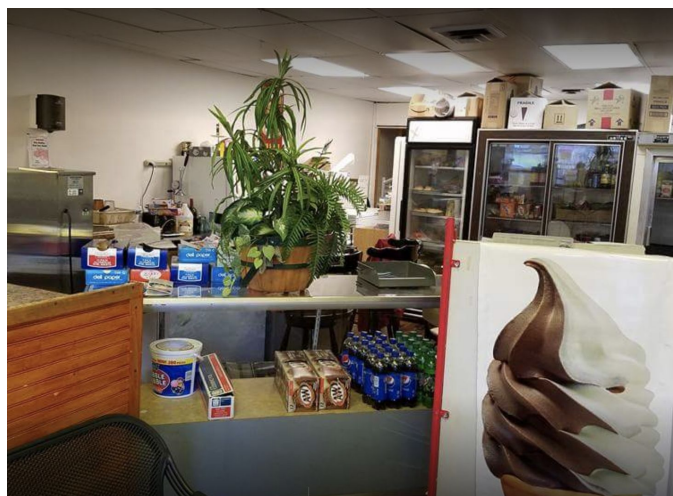
- This restaurant consisted of one large dining room that was filled with big round tables and another smaller dining room outside of where the buffet was set up with authentic Mexican cuisine. There were numerous families sitting at the round tables, and the tables were set far enough apart so that families maintained a certain level of privacy.



Outside of Restaurants

While walking around when it is nice out, we were able to see families sitting outside on their porch enjoying the weather. The families would be sitting next door to their neighbors who were also on their porches, but they would not socialize with one another. The disconnect between neighbors further exemplifies the social aspects of the community and how they can use strengthening. In order to spur community bonding and cohesive involvement, we hope to first influence conversation amongst neighbors and then expand to the entire community as a whole.

5. Faouzi's Talk of the Town



- Similar to other establishments, TOTF is located in walking distance of Paxinosa so many families stop by and chat with the owners after school. The ice cream window facing the street makes conversation with community members who aren't looking for a treat possible.

Convenience Store Observations

- Bodegas:
 - The West Ward has a multitude of bodegas scattered throughout the area. As we walked through the West Ward, we walked into a bodega on the corner of Northampton and 7th Street called D&R Market.
 - Inside we noticed typical corner store foods such as sodas and chips, as well as fresh baked goods from a local bakery they started a partnership with.
 - After inquiring, the owner informed us that they were planning on having an event to celebrate their opening, during which they would have a cookout with free food.
 - The owner also alluded on the transience of the bodegas in the West Ward. The owners had just opened their store in the past 4 months. Another Bodega nearby had only been open for a month.

Community Events Attended

- Opening of Kudu Creative 2/21/19
- City Hall Meeting 3/13/19 - State of the City & GEDP West Ward Neighborhood Plan Presentation
- Planning Commission Meeting 4/3/19
- West Ward Community Initiative Launch 4/18/19
- Mayoral Debate 5/2/19

After attending many of the City of Easton public meetings, we were able to see the devotion and focus that the city council and the mayor's office are putting into the West Ward. The community members may not know everything that is happening because many of them do not have the time or means to attend the meetings, but the city is working in their favor. In addition, the GEDP appears enthusiastic about their initiative and about promoting community development that will positive reshape the West Ward's environment.

Meetings with Involved Parties

We made an effort to reach out to those within the West Ward and the surrounding community who have insights or are working towards similar ends, including:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| -Ms. Amy Boccadoro | -Mr. Bob Sell |
| -Mr. Abu Rizvi | -Mr. Curt Ehly |
| -Mr. Maurice Luker | -Ms. Melissa Starace |

Personal and professional descriptions can be found in the Contacts section at the end of this report.

ASSET MAPPING

Asset Mapping

In order to better assess the West Ward we formally mapped assets that were identified by the residents of the West Ward. Our approach focuses on positive community assets rather than deficits. This enables us to more productively gauge solutions and programs that the people of the West Ward would like. In other words, it is better to start with strengths and build on those, rather than dwell on perceived deficits and weaknesses.

For the purpose of this work we defined assets as facets, both physical and intangible, which are full of potential and/or valuable as **identified by the community**. Our definition therefore, transcends traditional economic approaches to asset mapping. **With this in mind we assessed the collective assets of the West Ward to be:**

- **Racial and Ethnic Diversity:** The West Ward is home to a myriad of diverse communities who express their unique identities
- **Affordable Housing:** Housing in the West Ward is very affordable and available. There is also space for development.
- **Educational Institutions:** The West Ward has a large youth population. To support this group, it offers many educational institutions and services, such as Paxinosa

Elementary School and the Easton Area Community Center.

- **Small Businesses and Restaurants:** Just walking down Northampton street alone, one can observe a smattering of small businesses and restaurants. This representative of the community's flourishing entrepreneurship. The salvation army, Porter's Pub, D&J Market, and Daddy's Place are just a few.
- **Community History:** Historically, the West Ward has been home to many different communities. Additionally, many important historical landmarks and districts can be leveraged to promote community unity and bonding.
- **Location:** Situated Near New York City and in proximity to downtown Easton, the West Ward has the potential be a community hub. The neighborhood's small parks, educational institutions, services, and businesses are attractive to residents and other members of the Easton community.
- **Opportunity Zone:** The West Ward has been named, among other neighborhoods in the United States, as an Opportunity Zone by the new presidential administration. This federal tax plan designation incentivizes investment in the West Ward by developers, as elaborated by the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group.

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Opportunities for Engagement:

A. MARKET WITH FRESH PRODUCE

Food Desert Status:

As addressed in the Planet Money podcast called “Dollar Stores vs. Lettuce,” the dilemma involving fresh produce in food deserts is the financial burden of that fresh food. The podcast calls to attention the effect that large dollar store chains have on lower income communities. Those stores are able to supply unhealthy mass produced foods at a low price to the communities.

There have also been many articles written about the lack of capacity in New York City bodegas for fresh produce. The lack of shelf time as well as the higher price of the fresh produce results in wasted food and unredeemable expenses for the bodega owners. However, it may be possible for Bodega owners to expand their markets to the size of a larger store, such as the markets mentioned later, to include fresh produce and other foods.

In order to collectively support the financial needs of the bodegas owners as well as the nutritional needs of the West Ward residents, the community could benefit from encouraging bodega owners to find a way to carry some fresh produce, as well as finding a place for a smaller grocery store that focuses on low priced fresh produce.

New Kumasi Market: In similar communities, markets sell fresh produce in the front of the store toward the street in addition to other foods and goods in the back. For example, the New Kumasi Market in the Peckham Borough of London provides the dual role of what the bodegas in the West Ward are providing, in addition to fresh produce. Peckham is a similarly culturally diverse community with lower and middle income residence. If fresh produce is incorporated into these retailers, both the proprietors and the residents will benefit from additional cash flow as well as a retraction from the community's food desert status.



(New Kumasi Market African food store, Rye Lane, Peckham, Borough of Southward, Greater London, England, United Kingdom)

Azar Supermarket: This market is compatible with the West Ward because of its extremely low priced fresh produce. They are a family owned supermarket that focuses on fresh produce, meats, and deli products. A market like this in the West Ward would attract the same patrons that are shopping at bodegas but would bring them to the market for a different reason. If a family owned store like this could be included in the West Ward community, the food desert status could be tackled and the community could find another main and pop business that brings healthier options to the community at an affordable price.



(Azar Supermarket, 3131 Linden Street, Bethlehem, PA)

Jacobs' Produce: Jacobs' Produce could be transformed into a market similar to the New Kumasi Market and the Azar Market. The West Ward residents rely mostly on grocery markets that do not provide enough fresh produce. Even though Jacob's Produce closed, the opportunity for residents to work together to restore their community with nutritional foods that are provided by the residents of the neighborhood still exists. A real public market with locally grown foods could allow community members to share their home grown crops in exchange for other home grown meals. The West Ward community could strengthen through these valuable exchanges with one another.



(Jacobs' Produce, 692 Northampton Street, Easton, PA)

Aldi: Another idea for bringing a small market that could supply fresh produce into the community is a small grocery store.

Specifically, one that would focus on lower priced products like produce, which allows the bodegas and existing markets to still hold an important role in feeding the community. One company that follows these lines is called Aldi. Their message says that “Our stores offer the customer the most commonly purchased grocery and household products in the most common size - in a smaller, more manageable environment designed with sustainable, long-term savings in mind.” This message supports the idea of a smaller grocery store that would fit in the West Ward’s urban landscape, providing the community with easier access to foods that do not exist in the existing bodegas and convenience stores around the neighborhood.



Opportunities for Engagement:

B. HOUSING

As our team has continued to explore the West Ward, we have realized that housing is one of the most important aspects of creating meaningful community roots. The distribution of residents and tenants and housing affordability are crucial pillars of how a community is shaped and we believe it should be a primary focus area.

The GEDP's current initiative to support public art, building facades, and community gardens in the neighborhood is an important first step to strengthening community in the West Ward. Similarly, South Bethlehem's Hayes Street corridor has seen more trees planted, a new community mural, facade improvements, and more home rehabs all in the name of increasing home ownership.

The focus on creating stake in neighborhood residents is a necessity in our project and we have seen diverse and novel ideas on how to improve affordability to increase home ownership in addition to beautifying the neighborhood.

Residents have specifically expressed a desire for affordable housing which incentivizes economic productivity along with allowing for mobility, such as escrowing a portion of each month's rent check to be returned to the tenants at the time at which they are ready to put a down payment on a house. We

believe getting bank and developer involvement would facilitate the development of this type of housing. In addition, this development opens up the potential to create cost-efficient housing through energy and monetary efficiency given adequate funding is supplied through the assistance of programs that allow tenants financial mobility.

Opportunities for Engagement:

C. COMMUNITY BONDING and CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

After spending time in the West Ward, it is clear that the social capital can be strengthened through promoting community bonding. Community bonding has the potential to occur in numerous outlets of the West Ward: art, food, cultural celebrations, social media, and many more.

Art

The best way to exemplify what a community values is through artwork created for and by residents of that community.

Potential Ideas:

- ❖ Mural asking the question “What do you love about the West Ward?”
 - This question leaves the space open for residents to write what they value most about the area, which can also be considered assets
 - Influence popular participation

❖ Murals on the alleys of the West Ward

- Provides opportunities for West Ward residents to come together and create something they believe is representative of their home
- It will promote more walking spaces for residents to utilize

Another cohort of amazing artists comes from Easton Area High School. The art classes offered at the school create an outlet for creativity and expression for the students. If the artistic skills of the students could be transformed into an ongoing art project within the West Ward, such as these murals, it would promote a mutually beneficial relationship between the school and the residents.

- ❖ The students will receive a hands-on educational experience
- ❖ The West Ward will be physically enhanced by the projects completed.

Also, artwork is welcomed from all members of the West Ward to be presented in a public manner. As Easton Taco and Rotisserie had done, restaurants are able to hang the artwork of West Ward residents while labeling the work with a name and a price tag. This brings recognition and breeds support for talented members of the West Ward while adding a new artistic flare to the community.

Food

Diversity of people in the West Ward creates diversity of food. In an effort to showcase the ethnically-influenced foods and restaurants that exist in the West Ward, there is potential for building a market where a variety of ethnic food sources all have items for sale. This market would embrace the diversity of the community while enabling the community members to make a profit.

Also, community gardening would be an efficient way to allow West Ward residents to both work for profit and to buy fresh produce for a reduced price. Vegetables in the Community already operates under the system of selling produce for reduced prices, but if members of the West Ward would be interested in creating gardens in the community, it would promote a work and food system beneficial to all.

- ❖ The current vegetable stand is located at 10th and Pine Street in the West Ward



(Vegetables in the Community)

Cultural Celebrations

In order to truly connect a community, there must be appreciation for all components. Cultural diversity is an asset of the West Ward that has generally been agreed upon.

Potential Idea:

- ❖ Celebrating holidays in public parks or other spaces of the West Ward
 - Recognize the diversity that exist
 - Allows members of that culture to unite
 - It increases acceptance and appreciation of cultures other than one's own
 - Celebrations could include foods, music, and dances of that culture

Social Media

A social media page on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter can be created to promote community bonding activities within the West Ward. There can also be a community member who is doing exceptional work in the West Ward that is featured on the pages. This brings recognition to the person, which might influence them to continue on with their work, and also inspires other members to take similar steps.

Outdoor Activities

We hope to encourage people to get outside more through forming walking groups. These groups can consist of families or people walking individually, but the aim of them are to form a cohesive bond amongst the people walking. While getting exercise and socializing, the walking initiative would help improve the mental and physical health of community members. We would like to also bring increased attention to the walking paths and nature areas available for recreational use in the West Ward.

Music

Music has the ability to transcend time and to bond groups of people together. Common tastes in music combined with a knack for playing instruments has the potential to bring people of a community together who might not have shared outlets to engage with one another otherwise. By matching musical artists together based on preferred genres, the West Ward could potentially host public performances for the entire community to enjoy. Outdoor performances could draw in passerbyers and stimulate conversation.

Community Newsletter

In addition to social media sources accentuating the great aspects of the West Ward, a community newsletter would also

be a great addition. The community newsletter would be written for and by the community members of the West Ward. Though it should entail what the community is interested in writing and reading about, we think it would be interesting to possibly include the following:

- ❖ A segment on a different historical fact of the West Ward each publication
- ❖ Historic building spotlight
- ❖ A piece highlighting a West Ward resident who had been contributing significantly to the community
 - This could incentivize other people to contribute to pre-existent initiatives or to commence their own
 - Sheds light on the great work of residents and community-wide appreciation

Opportunities for Engagement:

D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Continuous access to career resources is critical to developing a technical workforce to support economic growth and increase community stability. **In order to provide quality career development resources to the West Ward we suggest:**

1. Employment agencies
2. Community classes
3. Access to higher education
4. Access to technical and trade schools
5. Community buy-in programs
6. JVS investment employment program
7. High school and youth:
 - a. Career fairs
 - b. Access to college courses
 - c. Career advising and college counselors

Expanding access to higher education:

A partnership program with Northampton Community College could provide affordable technical classes for residents of the West Ward



SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

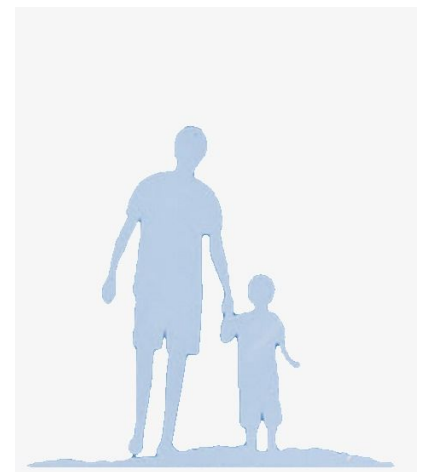
Opportunities for Engagement:

E. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The Next Generation: No long-term project can succeed without heavy emphasis on youth engagement, for they represent the next generation of activists, organizers, business owners, and overall members of society.

Peer-to-Peer Relationships

The West Ward is ripe with opportunities for identity conscious peer-to-peer mentoring, providing positive mentors who can impart wisdom and serve as agents of empowerment in the lives of young people. Paxinosa Elementary School and Cottingham Stadium both lie within the West Ward, and Easton Area High School ten blocks to the west of 16th St.



Youth Ambassadors

The GEDP's Easton Ambassador program has become a very important initiative to the West Ward community in facilitating a clean environment. Bringing that opportunity to engage in and help the community to young who are looking for ways to spend their time after school could create adult/teen mentoring relationships between the adult Ambassadors and the youth Ambassadors as well as encourage participation in City matters at a younger age.

After School Gathering

- Paxinosa Elementary School:
 - “Pax” has many nice tables outside that offer seating for families to communicate after they pick their children up from school. If more after-school events for whole families could be organized in this space, that would be yet another way to stimulate community-wide engagement and communication. Parents could speak to one another and to school staff while children use the yard space to get exercise.
- The Easton Area Community Center: The EACC offers after-school programs for school-age children. They welcome volunteers.



Our Connection to the Community: Rachel

One of our teammates, Rachel, is from Easton and attended Easton Area High School. An outlet that she wants to expand on is social media within the West Ward, and the youth would be a driving force in encouraging this. Since she has a lot of social media connections with residents of Easton, she would be able to stimulate conversation about the West Ward and what the youth views as assets within the community. She could also encourage the direct participation of the youth in the creation of West Ward social media pages and the advertisement of different community events.



Opportunities for Engagement:

G. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In no other sector has the West Ward seen more recent growth than restaurants. As old favorites like Uncle Wesley's and Easton Baking Co. have closed up shop, new and exciting eateries have clamored to fill the gap.

This spirit of opportunistic entrepreneurship must continue to be ignited, encouraged, and supported. Starting a business in the local community inevitably impacts the immediate surroundings and improves the living condition of neighborhood members. The economic productivity of the neighborhood goes up, and the money stays within the community without being siphoned out. Economic mobility soars when an environment has been fostered which engenders rapid and local innovation.

Entrepreneurship is not limited to restaurants. Ideally the West Ward will see growth in other sectors in the coming years, for when the community builds itself, it does so upon a solid foundation of support, such that if one piece lets out, the entire system does not collapse, and a new piece moves to fill the old's place.

However, entrepreneurship does not equate to bringing in big business to drive up housing costs and displace those who currently reside in the West Ward. We want to build up a strong economic base through any means available, without creating a scenario where the community ultimately suffers.

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FUTURE WORK

Future Work

Future Research

In the future we plan to continue our research in West Ward establishments, as well as talking to residents at any opportunity that we get. We want to increase our ideas for opportunities for engagement as we begin to formulate a five year plan for the future of Lafayette College's Technology Clinic.

Future Relationships

We are focused on creating strong relationships with as many West Ward residents as possible, in addition to the relationships we've made with:

- ❖ The GEDP
- ❖ The city of Easton
- ❖ The Lafayette College administration

We look forward to working with all parties, especially the residents, to promote voice and agency throughout the neighborhood.

Future Reimagining

Because this is only a midyear report filled with ideas, next semester we plan to solidify those ideas and work harder to connect with a greater sample of the resident population in the West Ward. Without those connections, our ideas will be

baseless. Thus, we aim to revise and reconstruct ideas we are proposing in this report to fit the goals and desires of the residents that we connect with.

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CONTACTS

Contacts

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Maurice Luker: *Easton Area Community Center President of the Board of Directors; Lafayette College Executive Director of Foundation, Corporate and Government Relations; West Ward Resident*

Melissa Starace: *Lafayette College Assistant to the President for Board and Community Relations*

Bob Sell: *Chairman of Lafayette College Board of Trustees*

Larry Porter: *Owner of Porters' Pub & Restaurant*

Curt Ehly: *Easton Resident, Member of Easton Business Association*

Faouzi & Georgette: *Owners of Faouzi's Talk of The Town*

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2019 WEST WARD

IDEA LIST:

- Open space
- Artesador program
 - respond to growth
- JVS Model
- Community News Letter
 - ★ Residents featured
 - ★ Historic Building Spotlight
- X Historic Preservation
 - Plaques
 - Promote New Restaurants
 - Meet there / talk to people / leaflets
 - Pastinosá • EACC
 - Kids + Parents
 - students
 - resources of revenue?
 - ★ Grocery / Market
 - AUP
 - Socia's Produce
 - Pre-existing Relationships
 - Rachel + Eastern Social Media
 - Youth
 - Community Building
 - Music
 - Bring community musicians together to play in parks
 - Eastern Band?
 - Murals
 - make by committee
 - Affordable Housing
 - secure, efficient, resilient
 - Relationships w/ Banks?
 - Apartment Complex
 - location
 - Social capital / amenities
 - make around it
 - Job training

Questions

- Where do people work?
 - ↳ how many low residents work @ West?
- Who owns the farms?
- Where do the community organizers?
- How do we get feedback from encompassing the population?
- What are these people for? what is they want to have done?

Implementation Groups

- Planning Commission
- GEOP Board
- City Council

Livestream Presentation on TC FB page
 → put link in NW FB page

To-Do List

- GIS Data
- EACC Contact
- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Meet with GEOP
- Meet w/ Lane W. - 4/12
- Maurice - growers?
- Leahy Valley growers
- Ella (Ardourer door)
- E-mail Amy + Maurice re: WJ residents who should attend

GOALS

- Give Community Members a VOICE
- Lafayette Farm Plan
 - ↳ No drug
- Inclusion of residents
- No "Lafayetteizing"
- Cultural capital/din
- BUT root issues first
 - don't chase phantoms