Executive Summary

Kenosha Social Capital Study
Education Report Executive Summary

The *Kenosha Social Capital Study* examined the role of non-profit organizations and churches in the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities in Kenosha, Wisconsin. 1990 U.S. Census figures listed a population of approximately 80,000 people. Ninety percent were white, five percent African American and another six percent were Hispanic/Latino. Hispanic/Latinos in Kenosha and their descendants come mostly from either Mexico or portions of Texas annexed by the United States in the last century. This population also includes a group of central American migrants.

The *Kenosha Social Capital Study* was an action research project developed and carried out with the guidance of Kenosha community representatives. The research was conducted by a team of faculty, research associates and students from University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Most of the research included observations of activities in organizations, churches and community events. We also interviewed key leaders throughout Kenosha and typical Hispanic/Latino and African American families. Finally, the project included a survey of Kenosha employers regarding their hiring practices.

Project Goals
Overall, the project focused on 1) how African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos support their families, 2) the role of community organizations and churches in this process, and 3) the dynamic between communities and their organizations. Through social capital we can also understand the reasons behind people from these two groups utilizing or not utilizing the support services available through non-profits and government. Research focused on the following questions:

- What are the community dynamics and needs within the Hispanic/Latino and African American communities?

- What roles do community-based organizations and churches play in supporting community residents?

- What is the relationship between these two communities and the Kenosha County Job Center (the government agency providing most social welfare services)?

- In general, what role do community-based organizations play in facilitating or hindering communication between organizations providing government-funded welfare reform services and the populations served by these programs?

- What role does race and immigration status play in this process?

A Note on Group Labels

People in Kenosha use several different names to talk about peoples of African descent and people from Spanish-speaking countries. In this report, I use African Americans to mean people whose ancestors migrated from Africa. Most people from Spanish speaking backgrounds in the community call themselves Hispanics. In order to accommodate current preference for the term Latino, I use Hispanic/Latino throughout this document.

Project Description and Methods

The *Kenosha Social Capital Study* was an ethnographic project designed to answer these questions by creating a description of the development of social capital through non-profit organizations and churches in this community during the study period. Anthropological ethnography provides a holistic picture of community processes through multiple methods.

Research methods combined the following data collection techniques:

1.   **Ethnography of organizations and inter-organizational dynamics in these two communities.** This research component involved regular observations in participating social service organizations and churches for an eight month period. Students, faculty and research associates observed day to day activities in the agencies, board meetings, coalition meetings and public events sponsored by these organizations.

2.   **Open-ended interviews with 25 key organization, church and community** leaders.

3.   **Family study of 26 typical families (15 Hispanic/Latino and 11 African American).** This component consisted of open ended interviews with typical families from a variety of backgrounds about their work and education history, involvement with organizations and churches, and experiences with diversity.

4.   **Analysis of secondary source material such as newspaper articles, agency and church documents, affirmative action reports and other government reports.**

5.   **A survey of 121 Kenosha employers focused on the nature of their labor force, hiring practices, and use of the Kenosha County Job Center.**

Understanding Social and Cultural Capital

Most people are familiar with the idea of *capital*: money that people use to start businesses, invest in property, pay for education and training or save for the future. Capital put to work in any of these ways creates more money that people can use for a variety of purposes. Without capital, people have limited options. Economists and social scientists also use capital to refer to several other kinds of assets that individuals, organizations and communities may have to sustain and improve their way of life. All of these types of capital are intertwined. *Economic capital* refers to money required for an activity. *Human capital* means education and skills needed to fulfill a goal. *Cultural capital* means knowing how to act, dress, talk and otherwise present oneself in order to fit in.

Social capital provides the means to get access to the other kinds of capital. It refers to social networks that help people obtain their goals. However, social capital involves more than simply knowing who to contact to get money, obtain skills or learn appropriate cultural habits.

Social scientists see social capital as the social relationships and patterns of trust that enable people to gain access to resources like government services or jobs. For organizations, social capital includes social relationships through both organizations and individuals that help organizations find funding, volunteers, employees, information, program participants and other things that an institution needs to survive. Social capital consists of two ingredients: 1) relationships based in enforceable trust with people or organizations who have access to resources needed to meet basic necessities and fulfill goals, and 2) knowledge of cultural cues which indicate that an individual is a member of a group and should be given access to those relationships. The first half of the definition includes three parts: connections, trust and networks with appropriate information. The second half of the definition refers to access to cultural capital essential to

use social networks. Social and cultural capitals are separate concepts, but they work together to help people and organizations to fulfill their goals.

While all people have social capital, not everyone s networks can help them achieve their goals. For example, Janice was a young African American woman from a strong family that worked together to meet everyone s needs. However, her family could not help her gain access to the resources required to move into professional employment. Other adults also did nothing to provide the guidance needed to obtain human capital through education.

Eventually, Janice did find people through non-profit organization activities, church and school clubs who offered the advice and support she needed to succeed in college. These same mentors suggested courses, helped her choose colleges and later offered emotional support to continue through college. She chose a career helping others partly based on this kind of trusting support.

Janice s story shows that knowing the courses to take is as important as having someone to provide an introduction for an education program or a job. Familiarity with the steps needed to get an education, find a job or obtain funding for an organization is the second part of the definition of social capital. Behaving in ways considered appropriate by the people who are part of social capital networks is as important as having the right contacts. This knowledge about education, employment or organizational development systems and the appropriate ways to behave and speak in order to succeed is called *cultural capital*. People need to know how to use the right cultural capital for a given goal like getting an education in order to have access to the trusting relationships of a social capital network.

Appropriate ways to behave are specific to local communities. The right way to behave, dress or act can be different for African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos than for whites in the same community.

Social and cultural capital are linked to human and economic capital. As Janice s story shows, lacking social and cultural capital meant that she did not take the high school courses she needed for college. Some people do not have access to economic capital to meet their goals. Sometimes, coming from environments without access to human or economic capital means that people do not know how to move outside of familiar patterns. In other cases, social capital can provide important links to family supporting jobs. Social capital also supplies support for child care, social support and other family needs.

Social and cultural capital are developed in dense networks often found in family, neighborhoods or churches. There are two kinds of social capital: closed and bridging. Both are equally important for individuals and organizations.

Closed social capital involves strong ties within sub-communities, like a neighborhood or ethnic group. Closed social capital networks develop strong supports for the people in those communities. Everyone belongs to at least one closed social capital network. It may be family, people who graduated from a certain school or simply local community networks. People in these closed networks are familiar with each other, practice the same culture and trust each other.

Bridging social capital means that people have developed strong, trusting ties across sub-community groups. Bridging social capital tries to create trusting relationships between closed social capital networks. Building bridges is an intentional and slow process. We saw many examples of bridging social capital in Kenosha. We also learned that bridging social capital depends on closed social capital networks.

Kenosha History
Kenosha is best described as an auto manufacturing town which has rebounded from the loss of its major

employer in the 1980s. Rural parts of the county still are agricultural. Anticipating a planned plant closing, Kenosha business and government leaders stepped in early to ensure that Kenosha did not experience high unemployment, crime and poverty levels. Chrysler offered retraining and relocation packages for unemployed auto workers, government worked with local banks to avoid home loan defaults, and business and government together recruited small manufacturers and service employers to Kenosha. Around the same time, the outskirts of the city began to develop as a bedroom community for northern Illinois. This led to an increase in construction employment as well as an influx of more professional residents. By the mid 1990s, unemployment hovered at approximately 3.5 percent. However, many of the good paying, unionized jobs had been replaced by smaller employers offering lower wages and benefits. The company town atmosphere had also been replaced by a larger number of commuting families.

The workforce for industry largely came from migration. As in other U.S. cities, the late nineteenth century immigrants from Italy and Eastern Europe who came to Kenosha for factory jobs experienced prejudice in housing, employment and all other aspects of life. As a result, they developed tight communities focused on church, fraternal and benevolent societies to provide social support As unions developed, social life also began to focus on the union hall. By the 1990s, the initial ethnic enclaves had broken down, but social capital and community still focused on the small group of known people developed through church, union, family, neighborhood and school ties. Given economic prosperity through union employment, Kenosha was slow to develop non-profit and government supports for low income people.

The history of the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities mirrors the experience of the earlier immigrants. However, like similar communities, people of color experienced even more extreme prejudice than the white immigrants and still face discrimination in education, employment and other daily life experiences today. These two groups have been labeled "invisible people" due to their small numbers and the tendency to maintain passive, closed communities. This characterization was just beginning to change during the study period.

Both African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos still experience discrimination in hiring and promotion. However, like most social capital resources in Kenosha, people with ties through already established networks can find good paying working class jobs. Many African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos have had a very difficult time finding work in professional and some service sector employment related to the new Kenosha economy because they lack social ties to people connected to such jobs.

The history of Kenosha and its communities of color show this small city to be a place where people migrate to find work, first in factories and now in a combination of factories and service businesses. It is a place where people are expected to support themselves, but where strong communities based on closed social capital networks provide resources to find work, housing, to socialize, worship and find other supports when needed. Churches remain a source of support and community in the 1990s. The non-profit sector is relatively new and reflects community history and values.

Kenosha Culture

Anthropologists define *culture* as the whole way of life of a people, including patterns of work, ideas and behavior. People who study organizations or poverty often use *culture* to mean values or habits particular to one organization or a group of people. This section describes unique aspects of Kenosha culture as in the second definition. Specific behaviors and beliefs are shaped by economic structures and other systems in a community.

Every culture has both positive and negative traits. In many cases, cultural habits that are helpful to many

people within a community can cause trouble for people who do not understand community rules. This is particularly true for communities made up of multiple closed social capital networks like Kenosha. Each cultural trait discussed below was mentioned by many people as impacting on the lives of people living in Kenosha, especially African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos.

People working with other communities may find much in common with Kenosha culture. Preference for known insiders is typical in most localities, particularly smaller cities or towns. Highlighting parochial knowledge over education is familiar in many working-class communities. Patterns of individualism and expectations that others are available as needed come from wider Midwestern cultural traits. These traits come together to form unique patterns for Kenosha. Understanding how local culture is similar and different to that in other communities becomes essential in developing programs in any locality.

Kenosha is a study in contrasts. Widely described as a blue-collar, conservative town, it also developed internationally known models for social welfare. Understood as twenty years behind most areas in the U.S. in developing affirmative action and anti-racism initiatives, this community also offered good paying factory jobs to many African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos. There are few segregated neighborhoods and most people of color report positive relationships with whites.

Kenosha culture comes out of its history as a migration point for people from many different backgrounds seeking factory work. Much of Kenosha s unique way of life stems from close, supportive networks of people working together to meet their needs through churches, neighborhoods and factory employment.

Kenosha culture is a tension among several seemingly contradictory elements. People negotiate these contradictions in everyday life, learning them as they are socialized into the culture. Newcomers learn Kenosha culture through trial and error, sometimes getting help from established insiders.

This study found the following elements in Kenosha culture that influenced social and cultural capital development for people in this community:

Rules and Allowances for Insiders: The first contradiction involves a balance between a wide variety of rules known only by insiders and the ways that the community makes allowances for known people who break those rules. This pattern shows how the community sets boundaries and tells people about how things work in Kenosha. As with many parts of Kenosha culture, these traits come from wider regional patterns.

- **Localized Knowledge:** People learn set patterns through personal knowledge. Many presume that anything outside of their personal experience is either wrong or does not exist. Information is not readily shared with outsiders and established Kenosha residents assume that others already know the expected patterns.

- **Conformity:** Community rules worked well for those familiar with them and who could live within them, but caused large problems for those who did not follow them. Many people reported that Kenosha is resistant to change, and following community cultural patterns is one aspect of fearing change. Since cultural patterns are transmitted through informal socialization rather than readily available written information or widespread education, newcomers are judged on whether or not they fit existing patterns. People who look and act differently are expected to learn to conform.

- **Support for Insiders:** The positive side of Kenosha culture is that people within the known social capital circle are provided with every kind of support. Rules are bent when the person breaking the rules belongs to the same group.

Insider Status Comes from Social Contact, Not Simply Racial Background: While this study documented many cases of negative behaviors toward people of color, the research consistently also found that individual ties developed through school or work were far more important than race or other group identity. We found two patterns:
1) Closed racial/national communities. Often, people had instrumental social supports exclusively within one race/national community because most of their social contacts were developed within race-based community networks and institutions.
2) Cross-race networks. These people developed closed social capital networks based on living and working in mixed neighborhoods, workplaces and schools.

Individual Attention and Boundaries through Rules: Another tension in Kenosha culture involves the conflict between providing attention to the individual versus the need for time boundaries in the completion of expected tasks. The many rules in an office establish boundaries. These rules are negotiated around the expectations of individual support. Kenosha culture involves two contradictory strategies to deal with this trend:

- **Individual Attention:** Part of supporting insiders involves being available to help them whenever they are in need. Previous obligations fall by the wayside as the staff person seeks to please the next request. This results in people failing to respond in a timely manner to less present requests as they always focus on the most immediate problem.

- **Boundaries through Rules and Egalitarian Ethos:** The many rules serve as a buffer from these expectations of always-available support. Always available support is only available to those who follow approved community patterns.

In order to counteract the trend toward helping known, personally present insiders before others, organizations often resort to lotteries or other first-come-first-served strategies to get around accusations of favoritism. In order to get around these solutions to allocating resources through closed social capital networks, people developed insider knowledge in order to make sure that they got resources first. For example, tickets for popular events may be sold out before they are advertised to the general public because insiders bought them before formal notification was published.

Presentation Patterns: Another aspect of Kenosha culture involves approved ways of interacting with others. People are calm and polite. On the surface they appear friendly. To people within their networks, friendliness is genuine insiders receive every consideration. Outsiders, on the other hand may be politely ignored. Communication patterns combine with communication styles. In addition to only talking with known individuals, insiders and outsiders are distinguished by their ability to maintain a calm, surface-friendly demeanor. People who exhibit emotions, talk more loudly than expected, move more quickly than locals or use hand gestures are considered potentially violent or crazy.

Education and the Egalitarian Ethos: As a community in transition, Kenosha residents had to address the need for more education against a history of factory work. Shop-floor culture privileged the camaraderie of line workers against educated or skilled outsiders. This played out in Kenosha as a suspicion of people with advanced education or who sought status through credentials.

Kenosha s egalitarian and anti-intellectual ethos played out differently among the educated middle class. Here, education and credentials were played down in favor of a low key, casual approach to others with similar ideas. We saw open reception to people offering good ideas to support the community. While being established in Kenosha mattered, the educated middle class was more open to newcomers who made a commitment to the area. Much of the creative social service activities came from the educated middle class melding ideas to fit the local community.

Reactions of Kenosha African American and Hispanic/Latino Communities to Kenosha Culture:
People of color responded to Kenosha culture in three ways: 1) developing passive, invisible closed social capital networks within the Kenosha community, 2) blending into existing community patterns by adopting Kenosha culture and establishing cross-group networks, and 3) maintaining alternative cultural styles and fighting for group rights in Kenosha. The first two strategies were most welcomed by established Kenosha culture and were most prevalent until recently. Leaders were beginning to practice the third strategy shortly before this research project. Kenosha responded through resistance and slow change.

Economics and Social Capital: Employers

Types of Employers: The portrait of employment in Kenosha reveals a community that largely consists of a diverse, secondary sector employment base. Secondary sector firms are small companies. Currently, firms fall into two general categories. Half are *family supporting*, *education required* firms, offering family supporting wages and benefits primarily to well-educated male workers. The other half are *lower wages*, *wider range of opportunity* firms, providing lower wages, more part-time work and less benefits to people with varying educational backgrounds. This second group of firms offers more opportunities for people with limited education and semi-skilled or unskilled work experience. More women and minorities are employed in these firms.

In order to examine available employment more carefully, businesses were grouped by similar characteristics. Analysis revealed several very different kinds of employment opportunities for people seeking work in Kenosha. We found the following five clusters of business:

1.   **Small retail and service sector businesses, sixty-two percent skilled labor force, moderate to high wages.** Forming twenty-one percent of the sample, companies in this group included small doctor s offices and high-end retail employers like a shop that makes and sells computers. Only twenty percent of the employees in these firms were part-time workers. Sixty-four percent of these companies had less than ten employees. On average, forty percent of their employees were female. All paid wages of over nine dollars an hour to their employees. Eighty-six percent of these businesses offered health insurance benefits to their employees.

2.   **Small service and manufacturing firms offering high wages and requiring skilled employees.** Forming twenty-six percent of the sample, firms in this group included professional service organizations like law and doctors offices and small manufacturing firms hiring skilled craftsmen. Seventy- seven percent of their labor force was skilled. Eighty-nine percent of the workers earned more than eleven dollars an hour. Ninety-seven percent of these companies offered health insurance and only fifty-three percent expected employees to contribute to the costs of their health insurance. On average, sixty-one percent of the people employed in these firms were men.

3.   **Service sector and manufacturing firms paying moderate wages, fifty-three percent skilled labor force, one-third labor force part-time.** Forming thirty-five percent of the sample, firms in this category included beauty parlors and small manufacturers. Most jobs paid between seven and eleven dollars an hour. These employers offered an even mix of skilled and unskilled jobs. Seventy percent of these employers offered health insurance to their workers.

4.   **Middle size to large retail and non-profit firms paying low to moderate wages, over fifty percent part-time workers.** Forming ten percent of employers in the sample, examples were large chain stores, nursing homes, and large youth serving agencies. These employers offered the most unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. On average, forty-seven percent of their workforce was paid less than seven dollars an hour and the rest of the workers earned less than eleven dollars an hour. Only twenty-eight percent of the

workers in these companies were skilled. On average, seventy-one percent of the workers in these organizations were women. Seventy percent of these organizations offered health insurance.

5. **Small to middle size retail and service companies paying low wages and offering part- time hours.** Forming eight percent of the sample, employers in this group were very similar to group four, but were smaller operations. Examples include small restaurants, house cleaning services and small stores. Half of their employees were part-time. Eighty-five percent of their workers earned less than seven dollars an hour. On average, sixty percent of the labor force was female. Only half of the employers in this group offered health insurance. Even when employees could get insurance through their work, they were expected to pay for the insurance themselves.

Hiring and Retention: Most people hope for jobs in companies like those in the first two groups. However, not everyone can find work in these firms. Just as there are two divergent types of employers in Kenosha, employees are tracked into either low-wage or high-wage employment. This tracking partly comes from the human capital and cultural capital characteristics of employees themselves. Ways that jobs are advertised and employer hiring practices which bring social capital into play also influence who finds jobs in different kinds of firms.

Advertising and Hiring Practices: On average, employers reported that one-third of their referrals came from friends and family, thirty-one percent came from newspaper advertising, sixteen percent from walk-ins, eight percent from training programs, two percent from unemployment, and nine percent from other means. The nine percent ⬚ther" category included hiring through temporary agencies. Temporary agency employment is a particular concern to some anti-poverty agencies because temporary employees rarely receive benefits and often do not graduate to full time, permanent jobs. On the other hand, employers like temporary agencies because they screen their employees for them and allow them a flexible workforce.

The types of advertising used to garner applicants varied depending on the size of the company. Small companies were more likely to get referrals from friends and family while larger firms were more likely to advertise in the newspaper or use the unemployment office.

Hiring in Kenosha is usually done by one individual in each company. The owner or chief executive was responsible for hiring decisions thirty-nine percent of the time. A manager or department head made hiring decisions forty-three percent of the time. Four percent of the hiring decisions were made by human resources. Owners and executives primarily did the hiring in small companies while managers and department heads were responsible in chains and large firms. Only nine percent of the companies used team hiring to decide on workers. Team hiring primarily occurred in small, professional service establishments where people need to work together.

Individualized decision-making meant that employees may have little say in who worked with them. On the other hand, employers might rely on employee referrals in deciding among applicants. Combined with the fact that managers and owners often had a lot of say regarding benefits, this meant that the employer had a lot of power in employment relationships. In the small firms where most employees come from similar cultural capital backgrounds and share social capital connections, the power dynamics between employee and employer may not become cause for concern.

However, in companies hiring people different from themselves, individualized hiring and employment decisions meant that the employer set the tone for employment decisions. For example, we noticed several employers who would not consider an applicant from a different racial and ethnic group. A few other businesses actively recruited a diverse workforce.

Retention: The tone of the workplace also influenced the ability of employers to keep employees. In a

tight labor market like Kenosha, churning or quick turnover of employees is a real concern for both employers and people hoping to place low-income workers into stable employment. The value of a supportive workplace is particularly important in a community with closed social capital networks relying on individualized knowledge and cultural practices.

The *Kenosha Employers Survey* sought to understand this process by asking about mentoring available for new employees on the job. Sixty-eight percent of the employers reported that they think mentoring is important and assign a mentor to newcomers. However, mentoring largely turned out to mean orientation by a supervisor or more established employee.

Limited mentoring means that employees need to learn quickly the rules of the workplace. Adjusting to a new workplace may be easy if they fit into the unspoken culture because they come with appropriate cultural capital or they already have friends in the workplace due to social capital networks that encouraged them to apply. Those lacking either appropriate social or cultural capital may have a harder time.

The Role of the Kenosha County Job Center: The *Kenosha Employers Survey* and the observation data suggest that few employers need to use a government service to find employees. The *Kenosha Employers Survey* found that only thirty-four percent of the organizations in the study used the job center. These employers fell into three types: sixty-nine percent of the manufacturers; seventy-one percent of government agencies; and sixty- four percent of non-profits in the study used the job center. Interviews and observations revealed that these organizations used the job center due to social capital. Government and non-profit organizations have strong ties to the job center due to contracting and information-sharing networks. Manufacturers are tied to the job center because KABA, their professional organization, works closely with the job center to recruit employers to Kenosha and facilitate employment in the area.

Implications for Policy and Programs:
This picture of employment in Kenosha suggests the following concerns for people intent on finding stable employment for families:

- *Employment and support practices need to be targeted toward small, secondary sector firms*. The prevalence of small companies in Kenosha suggests that many of the strategies to support working families developed for large companies, such as good employer-based health insurance, on-site day care and employer- sponsored transportation, will not work in this community. Instead, local government and agencies need to design childcare, health insurance benefits and transportation strategies that are employer pooled or community based. Ideas like small business health insurance pools, neighborhood based childcare, and car donation and repair services may work better in this type of community.

- *Employment development strategies need to address the needs of two divergent types of employers in Kenosha*. Both types of employers are needed in the Kenosha economy. Since the tight labor market has already increased wages and benefits, simply calling for improving basic wage levels will not improve conditions for Kenosha families. Given the small size of these firms, many cannot remain in business if solutions simply focus on employer driven strategies. Given the strong sense of individuality common in Kenosha culture, mandates are not likely to be well received. Therefore, more individualized strategies to improve wages, working conditions and employment prospects are important in Kenosha.

- *Targeted training combined with links between employer and potential employees will work best for some Kenosha firms*. This research suggests that half of the employers offer good benefits and wages to a skilled workforce. Developing targeted training initiatives to help Kenosha residents

develop the skills needed for these jobs will improve working and training conditions for half of the employers and employees in Kenosha. However, given the limited number of jobs of this nature in Kenosha, trying to move everyone into these jobs will not succeed in fulfilling the needs of either employees or employers in this community. While some companies may be drawn to Kenosha if it had a more educated workforce, it is equally possible to saturate the job market. Producing too many employees in one category may lower wages and benefits. Education and training for higher skilled jobs is important, but must be combined with initiatives for low- skilled workers.

- *Community support strategies need to be developed for people in low-wage sectors of the economy.* The other half of the jobs in Kenosha are with service, retail, non-profit and government firms that offer low wages, limited benefits and part-time hours due to available funding and common business practices in these sectors. Given that many of these firms cannot or will not be able to improve wages and working conditions, strategies for these firms should improve supplements for childcare, wages, benefits and transportation through government and non-profits.

- *Supports for entrepreneurs could provide additional family-supporting jobs in Kenosha.* Given the trend toward self-employment already evident in Kenosha, providing supports for these kinds of initiatives through small loans, technical support, pooled insurance plans and community-based marketing assistance could provide employment opportunities for some people struggling to find family-supporting work. These kinds of supports would also benefit existing small employers.

- *Social and cultural capital play a role in employment decisions in Kenosha.* Most employers in Kenosha use a combination of friends, family and word-of-mouth referrals to find applicants. Hiring decisions, benefits and supports on the job depend on the good will of the individual in charge of the organization. This means that employees need to develop ties to these organizations and develop the cultural capital appropriate to sustain employment.

Economics and Social Capital: Family survival strategies
Overall, the *Kenosha Social Capital Study* found three types of families in Kenosha:

- **Rising Educated Middle Class:** These families included wage earners with some college education who worked in professional or managerial occupations. In some cases, where there were two adult workers in the family, one may have worked primarily in stable factory or clerical employment.

- **Stable Working Class:** These families consisted of people with long-term good paying jobs in either factory or clerical employment. These individuals may have had some specific vocational training like a union apprenticeship or clerical training, but did not have a college education. In families with two adult wage earners, men frequently worked in factories while women worked either in factory work, clerical work or social service work.

- **Low-skilled Workers:** Low-skilled workers spent most of their work life in jobs that required limited skills and education. They alternated between spells on welfare and working in low-wage jobs. Examples included people who worked in low-wage secondary sector factories or service sector occupations like gardening, nursing assistant or cleaning houses. Many had completed high school and some had vocational training. People in this group were most likely to use welfare when times became difficult because they lacked the savings or on-the-job wages and benefits to survive without government support.

Social capital universally served as the entry point for jobs, education and other social supports in Kenosha. Almost everyone found work through family, friends and occasionally church or formal social

service contacts. Educational decisions were made in the same way. Often, work and education decisions were influenced by cultural capital too. Social and cultural capital also influence strategies to deal with childcare, health care, transportation and other social supports.

Families in the three categories of *Rising Educated Middle Class*, *Stable Working Class* and *Low-skilled Workers* each have access to different kinds of social and cultural capital. We also found different levels of trust within closed social capital networks and among bridging networks for people in each of these three categories.

Most educated, middle-class African American and Hispanic/Latino families have found links to college and middle-class employment through supportive teachers, co-workers, supervisors or church members. These supports provided both the cultural and social capital to move into professional employment. People in this category also were able to use their credentials to find jobs even without strong social networks. The study found that people in this group were more comfortable using citywide resources like the Kenosha County Job Center computer network or professional organizations where they may not have a personal contact to find resources.

This comfort with published sources came from familiarity and trust of ⬜mainstream" white resources. They also felt competent to judge among resources found through formal systems like listings of doctors or childcare facilities. Educated, middle-class people more easily bridged into other social capital networks among people with similar education and work experience backgrounds. For example, educated African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos were more likely to participate in organizations outside of their ethnic and racial communities.

Most stable working-class families rely primarily on friends and family to find work. Closed social capital networks also come from their churches. Most of their resources for childcare, transportation and other needs come from the same closed social capital networks. Many of the children of stable working-class families tend to develop similar career paths using the same kinds of networks. Given changes in the economy, the next generation also either moves down into the low-skilled worker category or moves into the educated middle class if they receive appropriate supports.

As with families in the first two categories, low-skilled workers also had strong closed social capital networks that helped them find work. The same networks helped with childcare, transportation, housing and a variety of basic needs. Low-skilled workers often turned to other family members, friends or neighbors for support. The same was true when cars broke down, people were evicted or they ran out of food. The difference between low- skilled workers and the families with more stable incomes is that these people do not have networks that can get them into more stable work. Low-skilled workers are also more likely to simply walk in and fill out applications for jobs than people in the stable working class because they lack direct connections to many jobs. Since people in the low-skilled worker category often lack the requisite work history to get jobs beyond their previous low-skilled employment, filling out applications for better jobs often leads nowhere.

Formal social service agencies are part of the social capital resources of low-skilled workers. Church social services are known in the same way. Through word-of-mouth knowledge within closed friend and family social networks, people learn which agencies to contact and, often, which services may be most helpful. Knowledge about how to use these services is also part of the cultural capital of these communities. Unlike the stable working-class, who are often ashamed to use government supports, the culture of communities that needs social services by necessity involves understanding how formal services can provide help when family, church and community networks cannot offer enough aid. While many low-skilled workers dislike using formal services because they are sometimes treated badly by agency staff, they do not feel shame when turning to an outside agency for help.

Implications for Programs and Policy

- *Formal supports are best advertised through informal networks.* People found resources through their closed social capital networks of friends, family, neighborhood and church. They learned about formal services like jobs, educational opportunities and other resources through the same channels. The best way to spread information given this tendency is to develop bridging contacts in closed social capital networks.

- *Supports are based on trust and cultural capital, not just information.* We found that people evaluated both organizations and individuals based on the good report of people or organizations that they trusted already. Much of that trust came from shared cultural capital. For organizations offering services or trying to develop workers, contact needs to go beyond simply sharing information. Agencies need to develop strong relationships with the people they work with and be prepared to modify cultural expectations to reach across communities.

- *Moving between communities involves developing both cultural and social capital.* The families who were most successful and resilient in this study could move between several closed social capital networks. These skills come from trusted, long term, positive involvement with people in different communities. Bridging social capital means more than connections or short-term interactions among people from different closed social capital networks.

The Kenosha Welfare System

The Kenosha welfare system experienced rapid change during the study period. Wisconsin s new welfare reform program, W-2, requires low-income families receiving government assistance to participate in work- related activities in an effort to rapidly move them into the labor force. Kenosha succeeded in achieving W-2 goals of reducing the welfare caseload. In September, 2000, 176 families were receiving cash assistance and another 126 were enrolled in case management or related services. This change was due to a combination of Kenosha s booming economy and W-2 s emphasis on moving welfare recipients rapidly into the workforce. While few families are involved in W-2, many more receive supports from government in the form of food stamps, medical assistance and subsidized childcare. W-2 emphasizes supporting working poor families through these kinds of supplements. Given that many of the jobs in Kenosha s new economy are service sector or small factory employment offering low wages and limited benefits, these kinds of supports are particularly important. In September, 2000, 4,901 families received food stamps, Medicaid or a combination of the two. The majority of these families, 3,080, only used government supports for medical assistance. A small proportion of Kenosha families, 818, were enrolled in subsidized childcare.

Kenosha differed from most of the United States in its approach to providing assistance to families in need through government. In keeping with Kenosha s egalitarian ethos of helping everyone in its community to become self-supporting, the Kenosha County Job Center did not distinguish between public assistance recipients and other community residents when offering job search and other related services. The Kenosha County Job Center was available to everyone looking for work in this community. The Kenosha County Job Center also developed close links to organizations offering housing, energy assistance, childcare, parenting, education and other services needed to support a working family. Through contracts and well-developed coalitions, the Kenosha County Job Center epitomized the one-stop-shop system that has become the ideal for social supports in the United States in recent years.

Despite goals of serving all Kenosha residents, funding for the Kenosha County Job Center largely came from state welfare funds. From 1997 to1999, roughly seventy percent of the Kenosha County Job Center budget came from W-2 and related contracts. Given the sharp reduction of people on public assistance

after W-2 started, new state contracts implemented halfway through the *Kenosha Social Capital Study* reduced funding by approximately thirty-seven percent. As a result, Kenosha is now trying to offer the same universal program with less money, resulting in some staff and program cuts.

Implications for Policy and Programs:
Like many government systems, the Kenosha County Job Center has much promise but sometimes fails in executing its program fully. Problems come from: 1) a combination of limited funding that in turn limits services; 2) Kenosha cultural views about government aid that influence staff behavior; and 3) limited information about Job Center services stemming from localized knowledge within closed social capital networks. Low-income eligibility cut-offs associated with many government programs also limit the ability of the job center to provide assistance to a wide range of families that would benefit from assistance. Kenosha County Job Center s challenge involves creatively expanding its networks so that community residents increasingly use needed services while contending with budget cuts, as the state presumes that the working poor are completely self-supporting because they do not use government aid systems. The following changes to government policy and programs would help the Kenosha County Job Center and facilities like it throughout the United States better serve community residents:

- *Determine funding for government services based on community income figures rather than government program use*. The Kenosha partnership between government and non-profits that provides holistic service to some low-income residents is currently at risk because the government center has had to cut services due to funding which is formula-based on numbers of people using W-2. If the goal of welfare reform is to support low-income families through work, case management supports, childcare assistance, medical care and other services available through government become increasingly important in order to maintain these families in a secondary sector economy. Basing government funding to communities on data on families with incomes below the median wage or the number of workers employed in firms offering low wages and limited benefits would allow government to better meet this goal.

- *Raise income limits for support services like medical assistance, childcare assistance and training*. As with many other studies of working people in the United States, the *Kenosha Social Capital Study* finds that the lack of universal benefits common in most countries for health care, education and assistance raising children makes life difficult for all families. Given political realities which suggest that universal benefits will not be developed soon in this country, I recommend raising income eligibility levels so that more families who do not have access to these resources through work can get the help they need to thrive. Allowing more families to qualify for assistance may, in turn, increase support for government services throughout the community.

- *Ensure that staff providing information to the public seeking services have full training and have developed empathy for people using government aid*. One of the weaknesses of the Kenosha County Job Center system involves poor services provided by front-line workers. Paying extra attention to the training and behavior of these workers would increase use of the Kenosha County Job Center and improve perceptions of the agency in the community.

- *Enlarge networks of organizations involved in coalition activities with the Kenosha County Job Center in order to improve service and expand community knowledge of government services*. The project found many examples of good service provided through a team of non-profit and government providers. However, agencies likely to be most in-touch with the closed social capital communities needing services are sometimes left out of these networks. Creating bridges to agencies within communities of color and their churches may improve supports for families in need and enhance knowledge of government services throughout Kenosha.

- *Use social capital links through agencies, employers, churches, schools, unions and other venues that are used by a wide array of Kenosha residents to share information about programs and the Kenosha County Job Center.* While anti-poverty agencies had information about government programs that were shared with program participants, many other organizations either did not have information or did not readily share it with all Kenosha residents. The Kenosha County Job Center needs to better advertise all of its services through presentations to people at places where they regularly congregate. In order to best facilitate use of services throughout the community, education sessions for gatekeepers within the organization such as teachers, floor supervisors, counselors, pastors and agency staff might best serve this goal. Given Kenosha s emphasis on providing employment supports to all Kenosha residents, information fliers and presentations should stress the egalitarian goals of government services to help everyone eligible for assistance.

Social Service Agencies and Social Capital

The *Kenosha Social Capital Study* concentrated on Kenosha s non-profit organizations that provided a service to families in need or who were understood as located within the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities. The research focused on three organizations chartered to serve everyone in Kenosha with a particular need and five non-profit organizations identified with the African American and Hispanic/Latino community.

We found two types of organizations that provided services to the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities in Kenosha. On the one hand, citywide anti-poverty organizations provided services to a population that disproportionally consisted of people of color. These organizations were considered □ strong" and ⊡well run" by the city power structure.

On the other hand, organizations based in communities of color actually served people throughout the community because they each had contracts for citywide services. These organizations struggled more for funding than the mainstream organizations. These organizations had their core mission activities aimed at their communities, but also provided these services to people outside of their communities. While citywide opinion of each of these organizations varied, all had a reputation for ⊡weak" governance and most had experienced financial scandals in the past. People in the Kenosha power structure were less sure of the quality of these organizations.

Part of this difference of opinion regarding these minority-based organizations came from the fact that they did not have uniformly good social capital relationships with the city power structure. Concerns also came from media perceptions. Finally, community perceptions of ⊡good" leadership and citywide criteria for governance were not always the same. These factors together influenced citywide perceptions of these organizations. Perceptions, in turn, influenced the ability to get funding and staff for these organizations, creating a self- fulfilling prophecy that made it difficult for these organizations to successfully fulfill their missions. Analysis of non-profit agencies providing services to the needy or to communities of color revealed a mixed picture. On the one hand, agencies received strong support from their community and worked together well. On the other hand, Kenosha organizations suffered from chronic under funding typical of small non-profit organizations. This was exacerbated by Kenosha s understanding of non-profits as charity for the deserving poor. The resources available to each institution depended on the resources of the social networks it was tied to. While citywide power brokers were concerned about caring for African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos, they judged organizations by their ability to obtain resources from the wider community and create strong social capital ties throughout Kenosha.

At the same time, this perception of weak organizations came from lack of visibility for these organizations and their constituent communities in citywide social capital networks. Decision makers often were leery to believe these agencies reports because they have no direct knowledge of their activities.

Often, non-profit organization analysts attribute poor organization performance to weak boards. This is not the case in Kenosha. In fact, we found overlapping board memberships including some of the same competent power brokers in the city in most Kenosha social service organizations we studied. All of these boards were racially integrated. In several cases, we found strong boards working actively for their communities that lacked the social capital resources to easily realize their missions. In other cases, boards consisted of people with access to citywide social resources who were on several boards. Torn between multiple obligations, these individuals were more likely to put their energies into fund-raising and governance for the organizations they perceived as providing more consistent service. They remained on community of color organization boards because they felt an obligation to community self-support despite misgivings about the direction of the organizations. As a result, they did little to help the weak organizations improve. The continued limited performance of these weak organizations became a self-fulfilling prophecy as under funded organizations struggled to meet their mission.

Citywide power brokers supported organizations in communities of color through contracts to provide services to everyone in Kenosha. These contracts had two opposite effects. On the one hand, contracts brought needed funds into these organizations. On the other hand, agencies already pulled in several directions found more of their resources focused on activities outside of their core mission. Community-wide support sometimes limited their ability to serve their closed social capital networks.

In an effort to offer bridging social capital, citywide power brokers created tensions in these minority community-focused institutions that were not easily resolved. Citywide solutions to crisis in these organizations reflected efforts to broaden social capital through connections to mainstream networks. Other organizations associated with communities of color continue to struggle to maintain their mission activity and build bridges to the larger Kenosha community.

Implications for Policy and Programs

- *Nonprofit funding levels in Kenosha are too low to ensure adequate staffing, salaries and other tools to meet agency missions*. Nonprofits become one employment source for workers, particularly in the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities. All agencies suffered from limited staffing due to insufficient funds. In order to adequately serve its community, funding and salary levels for small Kenosha non-profits need to rise to levels common in similar organizations elsewhere. Given generous community support already, additional resources may need to come from outside Kenosha.

- *Citywide contracts need to be better integrated into mission-based service provisions in order to better fulfill agency missions and build bridging social capital*. Citywide services sometimes stretch the missions of the organization as well as their limited staff resources. Boards and staff at these organizations need to develop stronger mechanisms to link these programs to the core programs for the agency.

- *Organizations based in communities of color need to develop mechanisms to bring mainstream stakeholders into the agency to become more familiar with activities*. African American and Hispanic/Latino organizations sometimes lose out on citywide funds because key decision makers do not have direct knowledge of their activities. Mechanisms like placing these individuals on boards, inviting them to view activities, and regular conversations can better develop these links.

- *Agency heads need to develop strong personal social capital connections throughout Kenosha*. Bridging individuals were able to obtain resources for their agencies because they participated in citywide activities and made a practice of cultivating trusting relationships with politicians,

businessmen and others throughout Kenosha. Newer key agency staff need to develop similar relationships in order for their agencies to thrive.

- *Front-line contacts like receptionists need to be paid staff with strong knowledge of agency programs and good communication skills*. Often agencies lose out on both funding and use of service because the person managing communications is a constantly changing volunteer. While considered expendable by many agencies, front-line communication staff are often key agency representatives.

Social Service Agency Use and Social Capital

Staff Practices: While many people reported getting good service from the Kenosha non-profits, we found that under-staffing did impact on service provision in agencies. Kenosha social service agency staff behavior reflected the patterns of support within closed social capital networks common in Kenosha culture. People observed that they had to wait a long time to get services or could not reach the staff person they needed to find. For example, one person tried to obtain a specialized service, only to have the appointment time reset over and over because staff would be pulled away for other emergencies.

Kenosha social service organizations also follow Kenosha culture patterns of working with people as they appear, not according to appointments. Some staff provide better service to people who are known to them. As a result, people needing help would identify a helpful staff person and rely on them to provide access to a variety of services.

However, we equally found organizations that would go out of their way to help someone that they had never met before. Staff would use their contacts to gain service throughout the city. In this way, Kenosha social service agency staff became the social capital conduit between people who lacked jobs, goods and services, and those who could fulfill that particular need.

Analysis of agencies revealed strong collaboration among agencies primarily based on individual social capital ties among staff. Caseworkers knew which agencies had contracts for which services and who might have a better connection for furniture or another basic need.

Usually, this involved a combination of direct referrals to other agencies and, if program participants had trouble navigating the communication practices at the other agency, caseworkers stepping in to ensure that their program participant received the requested service. This two-step process became necessary when the front line staff at the second organization did not relay messages to the requested caseworker due to limited time and training. Sometimes a new applicant to an agency had trouble accessing services because they did not fit into the social and cultural capital community of front-line agency staff. The front-line gatekeeper ignored newcomers or treated them badly because they were different.

Ways that People in Need Access Services: People accessed services at a particular agency in Kenosha for two reasons: 1) that agency was the only one providing the service; or 2) they had heard through closed social capital networks that an agency worker provided good service. As with employment and other aspects of Kenosha life, information was spread largely through word of mouth referrals. Social capital provided most of the information that people needed in order to find services. Within communities needing particular services, there was little need to advertise because people provided the information to others in their social capital network.

People coming to an agency to obtain a specific service often simply came to achieve their goal and left. We rarely witnessed people coming into an agency for these specific services asking about other programs offered by that agency. This observation implies that, while government contracts to provide citywide services brought money and people into these small community-based agencies, these activities did little

to expand the number of people who used other programs or enhance bridging social capital among closed communities.

This pattern shows that closed community patterns extended to nonprofit organization use. People in need would first turn to their churches and then to organizations with a reputation for supporting people in their social capital networks. Organizations needed to establish trusting relationships in the same way as individuals. For people of color, this often meant going to a trusted staff person at one of the organizations based in communities of color.

Results of Service: Comparisons Across Types of Agencies: We found two patterns among social service agencies in Kenosha. In some cases, agency workers provided help that met direct needs for program participants but maintained a boundary that maintained inequality and existing closed social capital networks. Mainstream agency staff were more likely to practice this pattern. For example, one direct service worker offered an array of services to clients, but presented advice in a rigid and patronizing manner. While offering help, the worker maintained a boundary through her manner that suggested that the clients were objects to serve, not neighbors in need. No social capital connections or trust were offered or built through this transaction. The program participants patiently accepted the service, but did not try to bridge the gap between provider and participant.

The tendency for organizations to provide help, but not always a step up, varied based on several factors:

- **The relationship between staff and program participants.** In most cases, we found that people of color in need seldom developed strong egalitarian relationships with mainstream white agency staff because those staff held subtle beliefs that program participants were culturally different from themselves. On the other hand, agency staff from any background that see program participants as potential equals and promote their development can make a real difference in the lives of the people they serve.

- **The cultural habits and closed social capital networks bringing program participants to the agency.**

- The social and cultural capital networks developed within programs among agency participants. For example, program participants in one anti-poverty program developed a close network that continued after participants finished the program. These participants worked together to find childcare and housing, and fulfill other basic and social needs. While these networks provided important support for these individuals, they also limited the ability of network members to seek additional outside supports. Since all of these people were low- skilled workers returning to low-skilled jobs, they did not develop either networks or skills to move beyond their current social and economic status.

Organizations based in communities of color and mainstream organizations often have different social and cultural capital related gifts to offer people in their programs. While mainstream agency staff often did little to create bridges across class and race boundaries, sometimes these organizations offered important social and cultural capital support that changed the lives of program participants. While staff at organizations based in communities of color were more likely to offer holistic services to program participants with an egalitarian ethos, these organizations did not always have the social capital ties themselves to build bridges into other communities.

If the goals of social service are to support families through services in keeping with their current closed social and cultural capital networks, both types of non-profit organizations in Kenosha achieve this goal quite well, though sometimes in different ways. Both organizations and participants relied on their

established closed social capital networks to achieve these goals.

If non-profits also intend to foster bridging social capital, the extra ingredient of social trust between program participant and staff needs to exist in order to make links into different worlds. In many cases, people of color from the same communities as program participants, but who worked in mainstream organizations, provided the important link between closed social capital communities and other opportunities.

Implications for Policy and Programs

- *Making concrete connections between citywide services and core agency services is an important way to build agency use and create bridging social capital*. Given that people using non-profits for citywide services do not pay attention to other services offered by the organization, staff should pay special attention to introducing these people to other agency programs. Since this is best done through social capital networks of participants, introducing people who use the agency in a casual way to people in core programs may achieve this goal.

- *Enhancing the circle of care throughout the community and building bridging social capital through mentoring*. Many people receive strong social supports through agency staff they trust who connect them to goods and services in related organizations. Strengthening this process by drawing on successful people within the community to work more closely with program participants may achieve this goal. Agency board members and church volunteers are important resources in this process.

Churches and Social Capital

Policy makers and some researchers think of churches as an alternative form of support for families. Some policy makers think that churches can do a better job of providing for poor families than either government or non-profit organizations. These people think that churches have social capital that government and non-profit organizations lack. Others see churches as teaching appropriate values. These people see churches as purveyors of cultural capital.

Instrumental Supports through Churches: Each of the churches offered a variety of social and economic supports to their members and the wider community. For the most part, these ministries took two forms. Formal mission committees of both women and men visited the sick, provided spiritual and emotional support to families facing hard times, and gave away goods and sometimes cash to people in need. People helped through church instrumental support included both parishioners and others in the community.

One hallmark of church instrumental support involved the circle of giving and receiving in the African American congregations. Most families active in helping others through church and their work had received similar support themselves. The circle of care ranged from social visits when someone was ill to long-term financial or mentoring support.

Church instrumental support took a more formal shape in the Catholic parish. Here, ministry was provided either through the center for the Spanish-speaking population or the St. Vincent de Paul office. Givers and receivers often differed by generation and sometimes race. For example, most of the people receiving aid were newcomer Mexicans or African Americans.

Churches as Training Ground and Developers of Cultural Capital: We found that the churches role as training ground and spiritual well for people involved in social welfare activities in the community was far more important than direct social service because of the range of social welfare activities provided by

congregation members. Most of the African Americans working as teachers, counselors, and social service agency employees, and in other helping roles in Kenosha were active in church and came from religious backgrounds. Churches taught leadership, values appreciated by mainstream culture, and the patience to work with difficult populations. Churches encouraged both education and work that offered more than financial remuneration. Faith-based ministries for youth development, education and political activities eclipsed the instrumental ministries in importance for people participating in these activities. Both of the larger African American churches strove to involve their members in several ministries.

We saw the same relationship between faith and works in the Hispanic/Latino Catholic community, though less frequently. Given the formalized nature of social support, church-based activity often involved individuals who either were asked to participate in social welfare activities or volunteered to help others. Examples include nuns or priests asking someone to take on a faith-based social welfare job or Anglos who helped out Hispanic/Latino families through a church-sponsored activity. In both cases, initial participation in church- based service led to a life of work for others through non-sectarian social service venues.

How Do Churches Build Social Capital?: Kenosha African American and Hispanic/Latino community churches built social capital through a slow and consistent process of developing community and establishing trust among their members. For example, at a meeting at one church committee, parishioners arranged food for a sick person. In addition, Tasha, a newcomer to the church, was offered a combination of emotional, spiritual and instrumental support as she was introduced to the community by her aunt as one in need of prayer as she struggled with a learning disability. Tasha was welcomed into the church community through prayers and caring words. Hugs and encouragement help develop trust in this supporting community. With this trust, Tasha hopefully will feel comfortable asking church members for help if she struggles in school. Church members learn that Tasha has a problem that requires their assistance, understanding her as a member of their community in need rather than a young person who fails at school for an unknown reason. They are more likely to help her because both relationships and trust have been established.

Bridging Churches: Two churches that participated in this project developed bridging links as organizations and fostered bridging social capital among their members. A number of members of these churches talked about how their church provided a strong sense of self for African Americans. These churches were most likely to have members who went to college, were employed in professional jobs and were involved in social service activity throughout Kenosha. These churches also were most likely to draw members from newcomers to the area.

Implementing a bridging vision included involving church members in active ministries to develop themselves and the community, an active practice of joint worship and advocacy activities with both white and African American churches, and participation in community social service and politics. As a result, African American churches and their members are becoming a visible presence in Kenosha for the first time.

Closed Social Capital: Members of all churches practiced closed social capital, as was common among most people of color in Kenosha. Closed social capital involves equally strong networks that people rely on for social, economic and emotional supports. However, community boundaries are carefully guarded and social capital networks are maintained within the network. These organizations and their members become invisible to outsiders. As organizations, all of the churches serving people of color practiced closed social capital. The bridging churches exhibited both bridging and closed social capital, while leaders and members of closed communities only went to outsiders when they needed something.

Building Cultural Capital: Churches built cultural capital in a variety of ways, too. Most mechanisms

were subtle encouragement for certain kinds of behavior. For example, one church listed the names of all the college students who belonged to the congregation in the weekly bulletin.

While most of these examples show support for education and advancement, the smaller, working-class and low-skilled worker churches did not always support behaviors valued by mainstream society. For example, one of our field workers, Raymond, was an African American from a low-income community seeking a college education. He reported to me that he felt unwelcome because church members resented him for going to college. Appropriate cultural patterns in this community meant not getting above everyone else through advanced education.

Churches as Providers of Social Welfare Services: This study suggests that churches provide a wide array of instrumental supports through formal and informal mission activity. Churches also offer spiritual and moral guidance that helps their members develop social and cultural capital appreciated by employers, schools and other aspects of mainstream society.

Churches do not necessarily provide appropriate supports to needy people. Three separate factors can create situations where churches fail to provide the combination of loving support and "appropriate" values that will lead to economic self-sufficiency.

- **The nature of the values taught by the church**.

- **The nature of the relationship between the church and people in need receiving service from that church.** For example children in low-income neighborhoods in Kenosha were picked up for church by a bus from one of the larger, white churches. While the church supported middle-class values, the children were not welcomed into the church community as full members like the families where both adults and children attended. The church may have offered new cultural capital, but it did nothing to provide social capital to these children. It is unclear whether or not the children absorbed the cultural capital values taught at church.

- **The nature of relationships within the church.** Some people may attend churches that offer a combination of community, social capital and cultural capital valued by mainstream society. Nevertheless, church members whose lives do not meet the standards common in that church may feel left out due to gossip or more subtle sanctioning in the community.

Implications for Policy and Programs

- *Churches offer training in many social support activities*. Volunteer work in churches provides on-the- job training in a variety of social welfare occupations. Organizations seeking new volunteer and paid leaders or employees would do well to strengthen relationships with active churches to locate appropriate people.

- *Churches offer social and cultural capital to their members who meld well with the congregation*. This research found that churches created social and cultural capital supports for their members when they were welcomed into the church community. This means that churches can have a positive influence on their members. At the same time, churches do not necessarily foster bridging social capital or cultural capital valued by "mainstream" society. Nor is everyone who attends a church activity invited to fully participate in the community of care offered by that church. This finding suggests that churches in and of themselves are not an automatic solution to social problems.

- *Bridging social and cultural capital through churches can only be developed when people meet as*

equals with mutual respect for each other. This research project found many examples of churches helping low-skilled workers move into the stable working and middle class. Churches that worked together with other churches in trusting relationships can change a community.

- *Church support is limited to the resources of those churches.* Kenosha s African American and Hispanic/Latino churches had much to offer their communities. However, their resources are not limitless. Finances depend on the means and generosity of the congregation. Formal programs depend on the time and talents of leadership and members, combined with the limits of financial resources. While churches could provide additional formal programs if more financial support is provided, churches are interested in providing supports on their own terms. For example, one pastor offers food or financial assistance only if an individual agrees to church counseling. This finding means that churches cannot take over all social welfare provision or substitute for government or non-profit providers.

Dynamics between Churches, Social Service Agencies and Communities

The various non-profit organization coalitions had little formal connections to the churches. Until very recently, few churches engaged in social activities as a united body. Church coalitions focused on joint worship or educational activities, not creating links to social service organizations. However, during the study period this began to change when the pastor of a key bridging church assumed coalition leadership. The major church coalition started inviting people involved in various forms of social service to present information on their activities to this organization. More churches became actively involved in social service. Churches also became more involved with politics.

As with non-profit organizations, we found many more connections between churches, non-profits and community through informal ties. This study found multiple connections between churches and non-profits serving the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities in Kenosha. Churches provided the base communities for many of the board, staff and participants in non-profit organizations. Particularly in the smaller organizations, overlapping religious and neighborhood ties became the resource for employees, board and participants. Churches often served as initiators of non-profit activity and training grounds for service. Several of these organizations started out as church missions. Many key staff moved from active church mission work to paid non-profit casework. This was especially true for people lacking professional educational credentials.

Church mission models also pervade service and fund-raising strategies for Kenosha organizations. Kenosha egalitarian culture expects most non-profits to rely heavily on church and neighborhood-based volunteer resources. This led to unrealistic expectations for organizations that did not possess similar resources. On the negative side, each of the African American and Hispanic/Latino organizations is expected to fulfill every need for their constituency, just like the church missions would find food, clothing, financial assistance, work and other resources for parishioners and other community members in trouble.

On a more positive note, church models provided creative alternatives to fund-raising through grants and other more standard mechanisms. For example, one minority community organization filled the inevitable gaps in operating budgets due to limited government funding with the parish fund-raising technique of Bingo games. African American and Hispanic/Latino organizations also turned to churches for volunteers to supplement paid staff.

These strong links among churches, organizations and community show that Kenosha creates a circle of care to support organizations that share the same ethos within that community. It is precisely the three-way links between church, non-profit and caring community that creates the circle of care that people need to develop the skills to bridge across social capital networks in a community like Kenosha. For

example, Janice was raised on welfare by a single parent after her mother stopped working to care for a sick grandmother. She grew up in a poor neighborhood and was labeled as learning disabled by the schools. However, she had strong supports through her church, activities from a minority community-based non-profit organization, and youth group activities in another African American community-based organization that provided bridges to the outside. The encouragement of both closed and bridging social capital connections through church and organizations led her to go to college and become a teacher. She now teaches children labeled at risk" like she was and actively volunteers for both church and the non-profit organization that provided further support to continue her education.

Janice s story suggests the value of both closed and bridging social capital. Without the support of the financially weak African American non-profit and her closed community church, she would not have developed bridging social capital. However, without the equally strong ties to people who bridged between communities, she would most likely have remained in the closed communities like her peers.

Implications for Policy and Practice:
In recent years, policy makers have debated whether non-profits, churches, for-profit organizations or government can best provide for people in this society. Policy makers also debate whether or not community participation is on the decline. This research study suggests that social capital and community participation is alive and well in communities like Kenosha. However, community and individual development is not a simple thing that happens through one strategy. Instead, communities come out of the dynamics among organized institutions like churches and non-profits, situated with communities of people who share common values and goals. In most communities like Kenosha, society is made up of many smaller communities with closed social and cultural capital.

Strategies to develop more inclusive communities must get beyond simply counting memberships; asserting that church, non-profit or for-profit providers are etter"; or debating the value of minority versus majority controlled organizations. Strong communities need a combination of all of these things plus people who can bridge between the necessary closed communities.

- *Supporting families involves creating strong partnerships among government, non-profits and churches that recognize the strengths and unique contributions of each type of institution.*

- *Developing partnerships starts with recognizing the assets in communities identified as in need of service.* Many of the books on church involvement in social welfare presume that church members come from economically, spiritually and socially stable communities while the people they aim to help lack spiritual and social supports as well as basic needs. In fact, communities always include a combination of people with different assets and needs. Working with these assets is the first step in building connections among the haves and the have-nots in this society. This means seeking community leaders and drawing on the strengths of the people receiving service.

- *Developing strong individuals involves expanding communities of trust through overlapping networks among non-profits, churches and government.* Programs and policies need to encourage the creation of communities of care like these positive examples in Kenosha through developing staff and volunteer connections among divergent communities and organizations. These connections need to include shared power and respectful interactions. Including partners from targeted communities at all levels of organizations is the first step in fostering these kinds of positive experiences. Providing adequate assets to build bridges across communities is also essential.

Conclusion: Social Capital and Supporting Families through Organizations and Churches
The *Kenosha Social Capital Study* shows that social capital is an important ingredient in understanding

how families find work, instrumental supports like childcare and education, and social supports. Social capital is equally important for organizations, churches and communities. Formal institutions and groups of people also need trusting connections to survive and grow. This study suggests a number of general implications for policy and programs. While these concluding ideas are focused on Kenosha, they hold for many local communities looking for ways to better support their families and organizations.

Implications for Policy and Programs

- *Developing strong families and communities involves creating equal partnerships among non-profits, government and churches that recognize the different strengths of each type of organization.* The sections on the role of organizations, churches and government in supporting families show that a circle of care involves churches providing basic instrumental, spiritual and social supports; formal organizations offering professional services; and government providing income supports and connections to other services that work best to support families. Sections on organizations show that neither churches, organizations nor government can do the work of the other adequately. Furthermore, the strength of Kenosha s public/private partnership involved adequate funding for all partners. The circle of care fails when one partner relies on the other to provide services due to lack of funding or other resources.

- *Both organizations and communities enable social capital through individual networks.* People obtain work, services, social supports or resources for organizations through connections among individuals. Strengthening ties among communities and organizations in Kenosha involves expanding these individual connections. The challenge for Kenosha and other communities like it involves the fact that these connections are grounded in pre-existing power relations and suspicion of the other. Through mutual activities, organizations and communities need to first break down the negative aspects of closed social capital if they intend to build bridging social capital.

- *Bridging social capital is built through key individuals moving across closed social capital lines.* Individuals or key organizational staff develop links into closed social capital networks. Sometimes this involves a bridging individual creating links for a closed social capital church or organization. In other cases, mainstream leaders insist on diversifying an organization s board and key staff when they are in trouble. As the citywide contracts for organizations show, bridging social capital only develops when people develop trust across networks through personal contacts, not simply by using an organization. The same is true for coalition activities or organizational growth.

- *Community strategies must be grounded in local culture and community practices.* The efforts that succeed in Kenosha draw on community ethos for supporting everyone as equals through work, connections among closed social capital networks, and localized knowledge. Ideas coming from the outside or that do not appeal to all of these elements achieve less success. For example, a church initiative aimed at simply giving things to the needy received limited support while another activity that spoke of helping people find work met with more success. Appeals to programs for all Kenosha residents rather than race-based organizing was more successful. While community culture will necessarily differ in various localities, it is important for planners to identify key cultural traits and understand how the community puts them into action in their organizations and programs.

- *Change comes from drawing on established social and cultural capital to expand into new territory.* The successful programs for individuals drew on the circle of care already established in community churches and organizations to help people find new directions. Positive participation in one activity led to movement into another related activity through individuals trusted in each organization. Without these already established ties, new growth would not occur. The same is true

for organizations. The church coalitions that are slowly changing the political and social landscape in Kenosha developed through years of joint worship and participation in activities that drew on older Kenosha cultural forms. The trusting relationships developed in these closed networks provide the foundation for more radical change.