

**Exploring First Nation Wellbeing and Prosperity through Health and Economic Indicators: Anishinaabe Mino-Bimaadziwin**

*2009 – Current*

This project places Harry Cummings and colleagues at Laurentian university in active partnership with Mnaamodzawin Health Services and Waubetek Business Development center and includes the Union of Ontario Indians as well as five first nations on Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. The work examines the relationship between economic development and health with a view to recommending improvements in health and economic development programming in Aboriginal communities. Focus groups, interviews, document reviews and community surveys are being used.

**Strategic Plan, Friends of Misery Bay (FOMB)**

*August 2009 – Current*

HCA is working on the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Friends of Misery Bay, a voluntary organization that is one of 27 “Friends” of Provincial Parks in Ontario. Misery Bay Provincial Park, located on the southern shore of Manitoulin Island, is an important site of alvars, which are rare, globally significant expanses of exposed limestone bedrock. The strategic plan will help the FOMB realize its vision to develop Misery Bay into a world class Nature Reserve Park.

**Development of Methods for Evaluating Client Satisfaction, Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre**

*February 2009 – February 2010*

HCA developed methods for evaluating client satisfaction with the services provided by a community health centre that serves the downtown Kitchener population, and new Canadians and Aboriginal people living in Kitchener or Waterloo. Methods for measuring satisfaction levels related to continuity of care, service accessibility, support with system navigation, and cultural sensitivity, among others, are expected to help improve service delivery.

**Blackwell Marsh Speciality Crop Area Assessment and Policy Development, City of Sarnia**

*Dec. 2009 - Current*

HCA is conducting an assessment of the agricultural production potential for the Blackwell Marsh Area in Lambton County and conducting broad community consultations to assist in the development of policy recommendations to define, protect and enhance the locally significant specialty crop area. The stakeholders to be consulted are City of Sarnia, County of Lambton, OMAFRA, local area residents and farm organizations, property owners and the County of Lambton Agricultural Advisory Committee among others. Ross Wilson of Acre Assessments Inc. is assisting the HCA team in providing specialized services in GIS surveying and soil testing, analysis and mapping.

### **Evaluation of the Building Stronger Organizations Project, Ontario Volunteer Centre Network**

*July to September 2009*

In June 2007, the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN) initiated a two-year project called 'Building Stronger Organizations'. The project was designed to enable OVCN to strengthen and support Volunteer Centre services in Ontario, through environmental scanning of existing resources on engaging volunteers, an analysis of best practices, professional development, networking and conferences. The evaluation focused on assessing the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project as well as the impact of the project on Volunteer Centres and organizations that provide volunteer centre like services. The evaluation also addressed the sustainability of the process. Methods used in the evaluation were, case studies, on line surveys, telephone key informant interviews and document review.

### **Participatory Evaluation and Planning Activities, Mennonite New Life Centre**

*June 2009 – October 2009*

The Centre was going through a shift in approach/organizational culture from one of service provision along to a social justice framework bringing together community services, community engagement, and advocacy. In order to assist with this transition HCA conducted four focus groups, two of which were held in English and the other two in Spanish and Mandarin. A variation of the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) methodology was used in the focus groups to engage stakeholders in a review and assessment of current services offered by the New Life Centre. A written report was generated along with a preliminary logic model.

### **Evaluation of the Toronto Enterprise Fund (TEF), United Way of Greater Ontario**

*June 2008 – April 2009*

The goal of TEF is to improve community involvement, economic participation and quality of life of people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness in Toronto. HCA was contracted to create an evaluation framework, implement the evaluation and create an evaluation plan for 2009-2011. A final evaluation report was also created.

### **Lake Huron Learning Collaborative**

*2008 – 2009*

For this NGO HCA prepared a literature review on adult learning priorities for formal and non-formal education for Huron and Bruce counties, developed a key informant interview guide, carried out key informant interviews. The purpose was to identify learning activities that should be provided by the Collaborative.

### **Strategic Plan for Economic Development, Corporation of the Township of Norwich**

*November 2008 – February 2009*

Building on previous economic development research undertaken by HCA for the Township of Norwich, a strategic plan was developed to guide the economic development of this picturesque rural community over the next three years (2009-2011). Goals, objectives and a detailed implementation plan that identifies community

“champions” for specific initiatives, resource requirements and evaluation measures of success were developed and approved by Council. A number of innovative strategies will be implemented to revitalize economic development in Norwich and help to ensure that it remains a vibrant community where people desire to live, work and spend their leisure and recreational time.

### **Economic Competitive Analysis Project (ECAP), South Central Community Development Corp.**

*July 2008 – October 2009*

The purpose of the ECAP research assignment was to conduct a comprehensive economic competitive analysis across the SCCDC region to provide communities and stakeholders with relevant and timely information regarding their competitiveness in key industrial sectors and to enhance their capacity for investment attraction and business retention and expansion activities. A variety of data collection methods were used in the research process including a review of existing documents/data bases, roundtable meetings and key informant interviews with various community stakeholders/interest groups.

### **Baseline Survey for the Huron Perth in motion Program**

*April – September 2008*

HCA conducted the baseline survey for the Huron Perth in motion program. The in motion program is being coordinated by the Huron and Perth County Public Health Units and is designed to promote an increased level of physical activity among residents across the region. HCA conducted a phone survey of over 780 households in the Huron Perth region to establish the baseline profile of physical activity for youth and adults. The results from the survey were used to help improve the delivery of physical activity programs.

### **Formative Evaluation of Canadian Programs, World Vision Canada**

*July 2008 – October 2008*

HCA was contracted to conduct a Formative Evaluation of World Vision Canada’s Canadian Programs. The emphasis of the evaluation was to examine the degree to which World Vision Canada has strengthened and supported community organizations in their ability to deal with child poverty. Lessons learned were gathered regarding implementation and program function along with suggestions for future programming.

### **Transportation Survey Analysis, Selected Primary Schools, City of Guelph**

*December 2007 – February 2008*

Parents at three different schools within the city of Guelph were offered a survey to complete regarding their travel patterns to and from school. Parents were also asked if they would be interested in their children participating or volunteering to support a “walking school bus” program. The City of Guelph distributed this survey to the schools and a total of 809 surveys were returned. HCA compiled the data from the surveys and completed the analysis of results. The results were presented to the City in a report.

**Evaluation of the Community Transition Project, Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations Inc. (OACFDC)**

*April 2007 – April 2009*

HCA conducted an evaluation of the Community Transition Program which is a \$15 million grant fund established by the Province of Ontario in March 2005 to assist the tobacco-growing communities of the counties of Brant, Elgin, Norfolk and Oxford to move to a more diverse economic base. The Province of Ontario contracted with the (OACFDC) to administer the program. The evaluation examined the process used to develop the program and the actual delivery of the program. The results of the evaluation provided OACFDC with information and recommendations to improve future program design and delivery of any new initiatives. As part of the evaluation process, HCA conducted a document review and a series of key informant interviews with various program stakeholders including program recipients.

**Private Career College Student Survey, Ministry of Education, Government of Nova Scotia**

*2007*

HCA conducted a survey of 1,200 private career college students on behalf of the Nova Scotia Department of Education. The main objective of the student survey was to determine employment outcomes of private career college graduates one year after program completion, as well as to collect information about their college and employment experiences and how it related to their program of study. A further objective of the survey was to collect information from students who did not complete their program of study, identify their college experiences and determine what they suggest could be done in the future to encourage more students to succeed in their program and graduate. The survey results served to address the information gap associated with the increasing number of private colleges and graduates from these institutions. The survey information provided a basis upon which evolving labour market needs may be identified, leading to the development of new training programs and to modifications of the existing ones.

**Economic Development Studies and Research - Corporation of the Township of Norwich.**

*August 2007 – March 2008*

HCA completed an Economic Baseline Analysis, SWOT Analysis, and Competitive Analysis for the Township of Norwich. The purpose of the research assignment is to provide basic economic data and analysis to be used for communication and strategic economic development planning. Three research elements consisted of the completion of an Economic Baseline Analysis, a SWOT Analysis and a Competitive Analysis which included a Land Use Analysis, Revenue Stream Analysis and an Infrastructure Assessment. The research and studies served to inform the Township's Economic Development Strategic Planning process.

### **Baseline Survey for the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph in motion Program**

*April – August 2007*

HCA conducted the baseline survey for the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph in motion program. The in motion program is being coordinated by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and is designed to promote an increased level of physical activity among residents across the region. This project is based on the in motion model developed in Saskatoon and now in place in a number of cities across Canada. HCA carried out phone surveys of over 1,110 households in the Wellington, Dufferin and Guelph region to establish the baseline profile of physical activity for youth and adults. The results from the survey were used to help improve the delivery of physical activity programs.

### **City of Guelph Transit Survey**

*May 2007 – August 2007*

Working in conjunction with the City of Guelph, HCA developed and implemented a web based transit survey of two major employers in the City: the University of Guelph and The Co-operators. The purpose of the survey was to generate baseline information on existing travel patterns and mode choice preferences of the employees. The survey instrument was developed with input from the City of Guelph and representatives from the University of Guelph and The Co-operators. The survey was directed at approximately 800 employees of The Co-operators and 2,500 faculty and staff at the University of Guelph. A total of 431 employees (54%) at The Co-operators and 1,535 faculty and staff (61%) at the University of Guelph completed the survey. The number of responses was sufficient to provide a 95%+ level of confidence in the results for both groups. The results of the survey were used by the City of Guelph to identify opportunities for implementing an employee transit pass system. HCA is currently working with the City of Guelph and the Guelph Chamber of Commerce to expand the survey to include other employers in the city.

### **Healthkick Huron – Huron Business Centre**

*January 2006 – December 2007*

HCA assisted the Huron Business Centre in their endeavour to attract and retain health care providers to rural areas by providing evaluation support for the HealthKick Huron program. As part of this support, HCA conducted an evaluation workshop with project stakeholders and developed a comprehensive evaluation plan which included a project logic model and evaluation matrix. Survey questionnaires were also developed and ongoing technical assistance is being provided as the evaluation is implemented.

### **East Wellington Family Health Team (FHT) Health Needs and Service Research project, East Wellington Health Team, Erin, ON**

*February – March 2006*

The main objective of this survey research project was to determine current usage patterns of doctors and other health care professionals by East Wellington residents and to explore variations in these patterns by different demographic variables (e.g. place of residence, gender, age, income, etc.). This assignment contributed to the development of a comprehensive business plan for the East Wellington Family Health Team. The information collected through the survey represented important baseline

data that served as a benchmark for tracking the progress of the FHT initiative. A telephone survey of 375 residents was conducted in order to provide a confidence level of 95%. The final report was presented to the Steering Committee three weeks after the initiation of the survey.

### **Pilot Project Evaluation: Community EFFORT Evaluation Advisory Group, Credit Union of Central Ontario**

*2005 – 2006*

HCA assessed the effectiveness and determined the replicability of Community EFFORT - a 30 month pilot project introducing the concept of Enterprise Facilitation to Ontario. Enterprise Facilitation is a person-centred approach to community economic development that was developed and trademarked by Ernesto Sirolli. It is a management coaching and civic networking approach to supporting entrepreneurs within their own community. HCA designed the evaluation with input from stakeholders and clients through focus groups and used questionnaires and interviews to gather some background data. The evaluation was conducted in two phases and included the use of a comparison group.

### **Evaluation Training Sessions & Manual Development for Guelph Community Health Centre (GCHC) and Partner CHCs**

*June 2005 – November 2006*

HCA was contracted to deliver four capacity building training sessions to GCHC and five partner CHCs. Staff were trained in developing program logic models, designing and interpreting client satisfaction surveys, designing and implementing evaluation research and analyzing and disseminating evaluation data. Self-directed learning guides were developed as a supplement to each session and for future staff orientation and education. Interactive, group work techniques were used.

### **Assessment of Effects of Bell and Nortel High Speed Internet Services on the Businesses of Chapleau, ON**

*2005 – 2006*

Chapleau is an isolated northern Ontario community that has been greatly affected by dramatic job loss due to plant closures. The Chapleau Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) initiated the installation of high speed Internet services in order to assist in raising quality of life and promote the creation of jobs. Bell and Nortel provided free wireless high-speed access for the core town and wired access for the balance of the town and three neighbouring First Nations Communities. Harry Cummings and his colleagues at the University of Guelph were asked to assess the impact of new high speed systems on businesses in Chapleau. They used focus groups, surveyes and key informant interviews. Three study objectives were: 1) assessment of the presence of key material, mental, social and cultural resources for the adoption of broadband service; 2) determination of the level of ownership of the project and its related interventions by businesses; and finally 3) determination of the degree of change in businesses' daily operations since the implementation of the high-speed Internet service.

**Assessment of Future Training Demands, Huron and Perth Community Mapping Report, Avon Maitland District School Board, Fanshawe College, the Bruce Grey Huron Perth Georgian Triangle Training Board and Office of Learning**

**Technologies**

*2005 – 2006*

The study area was in the counties of Huron and Perth, containing a mostly non-urban population of less than 150,000. The main goal of the project was to assess the labour market, map the community assets related to training and to assess the demand for distance education courses as a tool for labour market development. Two objectives were to assess the viability of an on-line learning network for employment training and to develop an outline of the overall employment skills present and needed in the area. The study unfolded in two phases. In the initial phase, a survey was administered in all grade 12 English classes in Huron and Perth. The survey assessed the work and computer skills of students. In addition a telephone survey was conducted of training organizations in order to gather information on all forms of training available. In the second phase of the project, a telephone survey was utilized to determine the skills of employees. Four focus groups were held with employers in which they were asked to indicate the types of skills they desired for their employees.

**Evaluation of Newfoundland and Labrador Primary Health Care Network Initiative – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador**

*October 2003 – October 2006*

This evaluation provided the baseline evaluation for this program, the development of Primary Health Care Teams and Networks in Newfoundland and Labrador communities. Logic models, evaluation plans and community consultations were completed in eight pilot sites across the province as part of the evaluation. This assignment was completed jointly with Med Emerg International Inc. A team effectiveness questionnaire was developed and administered to 8 teams across the province. Client satisfaction surveys were administered. The surveys were completed at baseline, 1 year and 2 years after baseline.

**Region of Waterloo Food Flow Analysis, Region of Waterloo, Health Determinates and Evaluation Branch, Waterloo, ON**

*2005*

The Region initiated several studies to gain a better understanding of the local food system which included assessments of the agricultural economy, access to food, rural health, and consumer attitudes in relation to buying locally grown and processed food. With the completion of this foundation research, Public Health initiated the Farms that Sell Locally Viability Plan in the Fall of 2004, to identify supports and barriers for farmers selling food locally (Region of Waterloo), in order to develop a plan for increasing local food production, processing, and consumption. The plan consisted of five interrelated studies including: Food Flow Study; Optimal Nutrition Environment Scenario (ONE); Food Miles Study; The Marketing of Buy Local! Buy Fresh!; Redundant Trade Study (RT). HCA was contracted to complete the Food Flow study in which a variety of methodologies were used. An annotated bibliography was developed and the Waterloo Region "Food Basket" was created. HCA also identified the type and quantity of

agricultural production and the type and quantity of locally produced agricultural products that were processed in the region. In addition, HCA identified the type of locally produced food items sold in Waterloo region. To aid in the identification process, significant survey work was carried out with telephone interviews of producers and processors along with in-store surveys.

**Socio-Economic Impact Study of Agriculture in Ontario – Sustainable Rural Communities Program - University of Guelph/Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Research Program/Agriculture and Agri-food Canada**

*2002 – 2005*

HCA prepared a composite report that focused on the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture from the perspective of industry and community stakeholders. The report also coordinated and prioritized economic development activity. Between 1998-2000, numerous agri-economic studies were conducted throughout Ontario; these studies raised many issues (socio economic/human resource/environmental) that had not yet been formally assessed. This study used these findings as baseline data and coupled it with new findings from multi-stakeholder focus groups to provide a comprehensive report.

**The Bruce-Grey Skills Inventory - Past and Future, Bruce-Grey-Huron-Perth-Georgian Triangle and Human Resources Skills Development, Bruce Grey Huron Perth Training Board**

*2004 – 2005*

Harry Cummings as Principal Investigator of this project, administered through the University of Guelph, led his team of graduate students in gathering information that contributed to an understanding of the present and future state of the labour market in Bruce and Grey Counties. With this information, an appreciation of the potential gaps between the needs of employers and the skill base of the labour pool in the region was identified and addressed. In order to gather this information, three surveys were conducted. One involved the population of Bruce and Grey Counties at large with the purpose being to identify the skills of the existing labour pool. The second called upon employers in the region to identify training and skills that would be necessary to capitalize on employment opportunities in the future. The final survey was administered to high school students in Bruce and Grey with the objective being to investigate the skills and aspirations of the region's potential labour pool.

**Operational Review, Resource Jump Teams, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

*2004*

The Resource Jump Team initiative was launched as a provincial pilot project. Developed by the Rural Development Division of MMAH, Resource Jump Teams are designed with the broad provincial objectives of: resolving economic development challenges or barriers that the community has identified; promoting regional / sectoral growth; developing capacity and partnership; building awareness and support for economic development; and, sharing and communicating results. HCA was contracted to assess the effectiveness of the six Jump Team pilot projects; evaluate the complete



program administrative process for effectiveness and efficiency; and to develop a performance measurement system for on-going monitoring.

### **Evaluation of Cancer Care Ontario's Vegetable and Fruit Behavioural Intervention - Cancer Care Ontario**

*2002 – 2004*

HCA conducted an evaluation of a community-based, multi-component, skill and knowledge based intervention program which was intended to inform, educate and support behaviour change related to fruit and vegetable acquisition, preparation, storage and consumption among Ontario women aged 25-45 and their families. The evaluation project assessed the pilot phase of the program in 12 test sites across Ontario, and reflected different community profiles (i.e. urban, rural, multicultural, Aboriginal, north, south, etc.). The evaluation used key informant interviews and focus groups with program instructors/facilitators and pre and post-behaviour questionnaires with program participants. The evaluation questionnaire included a food frequency tool, self-efficacy scales, and self-reported health scales.

### **Strategic Review- Agricultural Component for the Town of Markham , Policy and Research Division**

*2003*

As part of the Eastern Markham Strategic Review, HCA conducted a study of the Agriculture sector in relation to environmental, land-use, heritage and transportation issues. The study provided the Strategic Review with a profile of existing agricultural land uses in Eastern Markham, an overview of land use issues and general constraints and implications for farm viability, and a potential agricultural land use strategy for Eastern Markham . Throughout the process HCA was involved in numerous committee meetings with Members of Council and Town of Markham staff. Results from the study were presented at a public meeting and were incorporated in the principles and actions related to land use in the Strategic Review Final Report.

### **Strategic Plan - Volunteer Centre of Guelph and Wellington**

*2002*

HCA assisted the VCGW to develop their strategic plan. HCA provided the VCGW with advice and support in developing planning tools and put together the various components of their document. The plan served to secure funding and provide direction for the organization. It included a logical framework analysis, an evaluation matrix and an evaluation plan.

### **Assessment of Settlement Services for Newcomers in Isolated Rural Areas and Small Towns in Ontario**

*2001*

Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services (CIC, OASIS) were interested in exploring methods of settlement program delivery and the experience of newcomers in communities/regions of Northern and Eastern Ontario. This research project was directed at newcomers residing in rural areas and small towns in Northern and Eastern Ontario that receive less than 50

newcomers a year and who have been in Canada for less than five years. The report represented an assessment of the types of settlement services then currently available in remote Ontario communities and identified models of delivering services to rural and remote areas. The report also profiled the types of services being accessed and the manner in which newcomers access services. Information was derived from interviews and focus groups with service providers and newcomers and through a review of available documents.

### **Transportation Study – City of Guelph / Linamar**

*2001*

Based on the work of the Guelph Transportation Study, HCA was retained by Linamar Corporation to analyze a survey of their employees to ascertain how they traveled to work. With this data, the city of Guelph was able to determine how the transit system could best assist in the mobilization of Linamar's work force.

### **City of Guelph Transportation Strategy Update Public Attitude Survey**

*2000*

HCA conducted the survey of public attitudes and opinions towards various transportation policies and measures. Focus group workshops involving a broad cross-section of community interests were held and telephone surveys were also conducted. Presentations were made to Council and committees.

### **Evaluating Poverty Alleviation in Waterloo Region**

*1999*

HCA was involved in a participatory evaluation of a four-year poverty alleviation project in Waterloo Region. Evaluation activities included training in results based management, facilitating self-assessment workshops, developing and implementing household surveys, regular monitoring of project activities, participant focus groups, and mid-term and final evaluations.

### **Evaluation of Huron Business Development Corporation**

*1999*

HCA developed an evaluation model for the Huron Employment Resource Centres and a logic model for the Huron Business Development Corporation (HBDC). This was followed up with a complete impact assessment of the various activities of HBDC. HCA examined over 40 community economic development projects across Huron County as part of the evaluation process. The evaluation undertaken by HCA helped HBDC earn the 1999 Award for Rural Excellence for Contributions to Economic Growth.

### **Interim Evaluation of the Community Abuse prevention for Rural Ontario (CAPRO) Project**

*1989*

This Trillium funded project assisted communities across Ontario develop abuse prevention strategies focusing on farm families. Harry Cummings and colleagues used focus groups and surveys as a part of the strategy as well as an analysis of secondary data. A logic model for the program was developed.