



Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition (MFFC)

By Gavin Sullivan and Patrick Cullen

Phil 3000: Interdisciplinary methods for PPE



MFFC brings together Mattapan residents, organizations and others to improve the nutritional and physical health in their community. The organization empowers residents to advocate for changes they seek to see in the world by providing employment or stipends and letting them lead projects, volunteer, and educate those to the challenges Mattapan holds as a community.

"Our focus is on the health and wellness of the community."

Our group was tasked with creating a four week youth program that educates the children on the challenges that ail their community, and with a focus on advocacy, also giving them the opportunity to be the change they seek to see. Through activities, discussions, and listening to guest speakers, the program members will gain a broad understanding of the challenges in Mattapan and will end the program by submitting a letter to the mayor with greivances and possible solutions.


Working with the MFFC to create a youth curriculum involved the application of many lessons we learned in class, the intersection of which allowed us to create a cohesive and engaging itinerary based on community engagement and improvement. In learning about the causes of generational poverty, we isolated variables within Mattapan through which it is perpetuated, and learned how these variables manifest in its institutions. Our newfound knowledge of the breadth and effects of racial/class discrimination on the institutions of minority neighborhoods, for example, enabled us to develop a modules that detail its consequences on the Mattapan specifically, and promote methods of self-advocacy among young people. Our lessons empower youth to stand up for themselves and their families in the face of these challenges.

Our experience in working with the coalition revealed to us how many moving parts go into making a community work well. Each community has its own idiosyncrasies, and these are what make them vibrant. While we can apply broader concepts to understand individual communities, we defer to real residents to make change for themselves. Above all else, community improvement starts with those who live there and can draw specific solutions from specific problems.

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