

RELEVANT COMPETENCIES

PROGRAM DESIGN, GRANT WRITING, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Developed and implemented programs to improve service provision and enhance individual and community capacities.
- Built partnerships and collaborations to address structural barriers that limit opportunities for communities to access resources, and increase capacity and leadership.
- Created logic theory models, anticipating and addressing barriers to implementation, and establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure impact and ensure goals are attained.
- Responsible for assisting with the writing of grants, development, and oversight of budgets, and the monitoring of all grant activities.
- Planning, monitoring, and overseeing the execution of programs to track implementation and help the team achieve outcomes, and ensure quality assurance according to cooperative agreements.

STRATEGIC PLANNING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPERVISION

- Developed and implemented a pilot refugee community sponsorship program to help faith-based organizations resettle refugees in Pittsburgh.
- Designed surveys, collected and analyzed data to create sustainable and innovative solutions to address issues that limited the impact of services provided such as structuring teams, developing guidelines to assess the level of support needed by beneficiaries, creating protocols to improve onboarding, and setting quality standards of service.
- A frequent speaker and facilitator at conferences on building inclusive organizations and communities including 50 leaders in Early Childhood Development at the Parents as Teachers International Conference, and 400 attendees at the Welcoming America national convention.
- Assessed needs and gaps and analyzed data to create professional development opportunities to increase the knowledge and skills of sponsors, home visitors, educators, community leaders, and youth.
- Supervised 31 employees and guided them using strength-based approaches to ensure work is completed on time and staff felt valued.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOCUSED ON YOUTH, IMMIGRANTS, AND REFUGEES

- Designed and conducted community assessments using participatory methodologies following IRB guidelines to increase youth, families, and immigrant/refugee community leadership.
- Created communication strategies to advocate for and increase the visibility of issues affecting vulnerable populations.
- Led the All for All Coalition that aims to increase immigrant integration by listening to the community and engaging diverse stakeholders to advance the Immigrant Community Blueprint.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh JFCS Pittsburgh Spring 2024/2025
Adjunct Professor

- Teach the Global Perspectives in Social Work to MSW students and undergraduate students.

U.S. NONPROFIT EXPERIENCE

JFCS Pittsburgh 2021-Present
Director, Refugee & Immigrant Services

- Oversight of Refugee Resettlement programs funded by PRM and ORR along with post-resettlement programs funded by private foundations and the Department of Human Services of Allegheny County with a budget of \$5 million to ensure quality programs and service delivery.

- Improve implementation of the refugee resettlement programs by creating new procedures to collect data for compliance and to measure program impact and ensure financial accountability, new approaches to case management and service coordination, and new programs to serve immigrant children and youth.
- Develop and review program reports for evaluation, monitoring, and reporting purposes to ensure compliance with agency, state, community, and funder standards.
- Supervise a team of 31 staff members, develop standardized onboarding processes across programs, and provide professional development for supervisors and direct reports.
- Responsible for representing JFCS both internally and in the external community as an expert in the needs and priorities of the refugee and immigrant community as well as acting as JFCS's liaison to task forces, committees, and other organizing bodies regionally and nationally.

World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh

2020-2021

Senior Director of Programs and Impact

- Partnered with consultants to design and implement the organization's strategic plan to ensure fulfillment of the organization's mission with a specific focus on expanding the role of youth, and increasing the visibility and participation of diverse audiences and speakers for public programming.
- Supervised 10 staff members from three different teams: Communications, Youth Programming, and Public Programming.
- Led the education team by implementing initiatives to ensure youth participation in program creation. As a result, the Youth Board steered the Council's roadmap resulting in more youth leading virtual programs such as the [Emerging Global Leaders Seminar](#).
- Strengthened the organization's impact and leadership role in the region by designing virtual programming that highlighted relevant global and local issues such as the [Building Back Better summer series](#) by enhancing its partner network.

Office of Child Development, University of Pittsburgh

2016 – 2020

Project Coordinator

- Coordinated the capacity-building and skill development training and technical assistance program for Allegheny County's family support center network by providing programming guidance, conducting assessments, and developing and delivering the professional development curriculum regarding parent leadership, parenting skills, and child development.
- Identified gaps and barriers to accessing services faced by immigrant parents and designed strategies to address challenges such as adapting existing curriculums ([Ready Freddy](#) and PLACE, a parent leadership curriculum).
- Increased parents' leadership by managing and implementing projects such as the research study on [parenting across cultures](#) and monitoring grants such as Parent Cafes.

Department of Health & Physical Activity, University of Pittsburgh

2015 – 2017

Research Project Manager, Health Promotion and Health Access

- Collected and analyzed data supervising an 11-person team, and conducted community outreach and focus groups for 3 research studies: Andale Pittsburgh (30 participants), Latino Youth Voices (30 participants), and Raices (400 participants) to better understand behaviors and beliefs regarding health and physical activity within the Latino community.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ideas for Peace Foundation, Colombia (Bogota, Medellin, and Barranquilla)

2011-2012

Lead Researcher

- Trained local and international companies (Hoover and Scania) to create and improve their corporate social responsibility based on the UN "Protect, Respect and Remedy" framework to increase job opportunities for ex-combatants and low-income youth.
- Manage two projects in partnership with local government and two international companies (Scania and Hoover) to increase job opportunities for ex-combatants and youth in two regions.
- Provide recommendations and written guidelines to local and international companies such as AngloGold

Ashanti to create and improve their corporate social responsibility based on the UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” framework and assist them in the process of becoming members of the United Nations Global Compact.

IOM Colombia

2010 -2011

Community Outreach Manager

- Created an outreach strategy leading a 5-person team across different cities in the Caribbean Coast to find children and youth who were not handed over by paramilitary forces in the process of demobilization.
- Trained and provided guidelines to the Organization of American States Mission to support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS) to guarantee that every child found receives psychosocial counseling and Human Rights reparation allowing 140 youth access to integral reparation

Pequenos Cientificos, University of Los Andes, Colombia

2009 -2010

Consultant

- Create guidelines to include socio-emotional learning competencies into the STEM curriculum.
- Train K-5 science teachers to improve class environment and promote socio-emotional skills.

Ministry of Education, Colombia

2008 – 2009

Consultant

- Provided training and technical assistance to 8 departments of Education as part of the Ministry of Education’s initiative to create management plans to increase efficiency and accountability.

World Vision International, Colombia

2008 - 2009

Design, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

- Provide technical assistance to 5 regional offices to implement World Vision’s program “Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning” and implement evaluation baselines to measure program outcomes and impacts.

Plan International, Colombia

2005-2008

Senior Community Development and Youth Technical Officer for the Caribbean Region

- Managed the implementation of Plan International’s national program [Youth for Peace](#) in two states and provided technical assistance to youth, educators, and school administrators resulting in the active participation of 160 youth, 17 teachers, 160 parents, and two Departments of Education
- Recruit, train, and supervise 10 community leaders to implement activities for children and youth centered around education, health, vaccinations, sanitation, and economic stability of 1,400 children and their families in 4 communities of Sincelejo, Colombia.
- Create with local leaders 4 grassroots organizations resulting in the improvement of political and civic participation, advocacy and accountability.
- Manage the implementation of a youth community journalism initiative “Magic Box” and connect students with trainings around creative writing, photography, and storytelling.

World Vision International, Colombia

2005 - 2006

Community facilitator for Combating Child Labor through Education project

- Conduct community assessments and interviews with families, children, youth and teachers to gather information about the extent of child labor in two rural areas of Colombia as well as designing prevention strategies to support education initiatives.

University of Pittsburgh. Master of Social Work. Community Organization and Social Action Concentration. Human Services Management Certificate. 2016

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Human Rights, Peace, and Security. 2009 (*This Training Program implemented in Sweden and Cambodia admits 25 mid-level professionals from 5 countries working to advocate for changes to human rights.*)

University of Los Andes (Colombia). Master of Arts in Cultural Anthropology, 2005 and B.Sc. Anthropology, 2003

PUBLICATIONS

Taverno Ross, S. E., Smith Tapia, I., Saunders, R. P., Documet, P. I., & Pate, R. R. (2021). Implementation Monitoring of a Promotora-Led, Home-Based Obesity Prevention Pilot Study With Latino Preschool Children and Their Mothers. *International Quarterly of Community Health Education*, 41(4), 411–418.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0272684X20970375>

Documet PI, Louth W, Smith-Tapia I, Jaime MC, Miller E, Taverno Ross SE. (2020) Pedagogic Tailoring of a Human Research Ethics Training for Community-Engaged Research With Latinos. *Health Promotion Practice*. DOI: [:10.1177/1524839920954122](https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839920954122)

Taverno Ross SE, Smith-Tapia I, Saunders RP, Documet PI, Pate RR (2020). Implementation Monitoring of a Promotora-Led, Home-Based Obesity Prevention Pilot Study With Latino Preschool Children and Their Mothers. *International Quarterly of Community Health Education*. DOI: [:10.1177/0272684X20970375](https://doi.org/10.1177/0272684X20970375)

Taverno Ross, Sharon E., Macia, L., Documet, P. I., Escibano, C., Mirzakazemi, T., Smith-Tapia, I., (2018). Latino Parents' Perceptions of Physical Activity and Healthy Eating: At the Intersection of Culture, Family, and Health. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, Volume 50, Issue 10, 968 - 976 dori: DOI: [10.1016/j.jneb.2017.12.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2017.12.010)

Taverno Ross, S. E., Documet, P. I., Pate, R. R., Saunders, R. P., Macia, L., Sanchez, I., & Wisniewski, L. (2016). ANDALE Pittsburgh - study protocol for A promotora-mediated, family-based intervention to prevent obesity in Latino children: 2427 board #8 June 3, 9. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 48, 665.L DOI: [10.1249/01.mss.0000486996.35670.49](https://doi.org/10.1249/01.mss.0000486996.35670.49)

Macia, L., Documet, P. I., Escibano, C., Mirzakazemi, T., Sanchez, I., & Taverno Ross, S. E. (2016). Latino parents of preschoolers' perceptions of healthy living: Focus group findings to inform intervention. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 48, 159. DOI: [10.1016/j.jneb.2017.12.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2017.12.010)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Fluent in Spanish, English, Airtable, Canva, Constant Contact, Qualtrics, and Microsoft Office.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

2025 - Current ARYSE Board Member. Pittsburgh, PA.

2016 - 2019 Casa San Jose Board Member. Pittsburgh, PA