



MICHIGAN BENEFITS ACCESS

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**An Innovative Public-Private
Partnership to Expand the Social
Safety Net**

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- Effective Collaboration among
 - Community Organizations
 - State Governmental Agencies
 - Philanthropic Foundations

- Innovative attention to the public safety net for distressed families and children
 - Supplement state government services
 - Faster, easier, local access to benefits
 - No wrong door policy



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\$934 Million in
benefits "left on
the table"

**Auto Industry
Collapse**
**Growing Welfare
Caseload**
Worker Overload

Issues

**Governor's Office of
Foundation Liaison**
**Strong Foundation
Interest**

Existing Software
Initiative



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Cast of Characters

Funders

- Open Society Foundation
- W.K.Kellogg Foundation
- Kresge Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Others

Private Sector (NGOs)

- Mich. Assoc. of United Ways
- United Way for SE Mich
- Mich. Council on Crime & Delinquency
- Michigan Primary Care Association
- Mich. Community

Public Sector

- Michigan Dept. of Human Services
- Governor's Office of Foundation Liaison
- Michigan Dept. of Technology, Management., & Budget

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MBA Goals



Technology:

- On-line benefit applications, etc.
- Simple, easy to use, widely available
- Reduce DHS staffing obligations



Outreach:

- Community-based, “client-centric”
- Community- and faith-based organizations
- Provide direct assistance to clients



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MI Bridges Technology Platform

On-line application for all DHS benefit programs

On-line application for Medicaid

On-line "Check my Benefits"

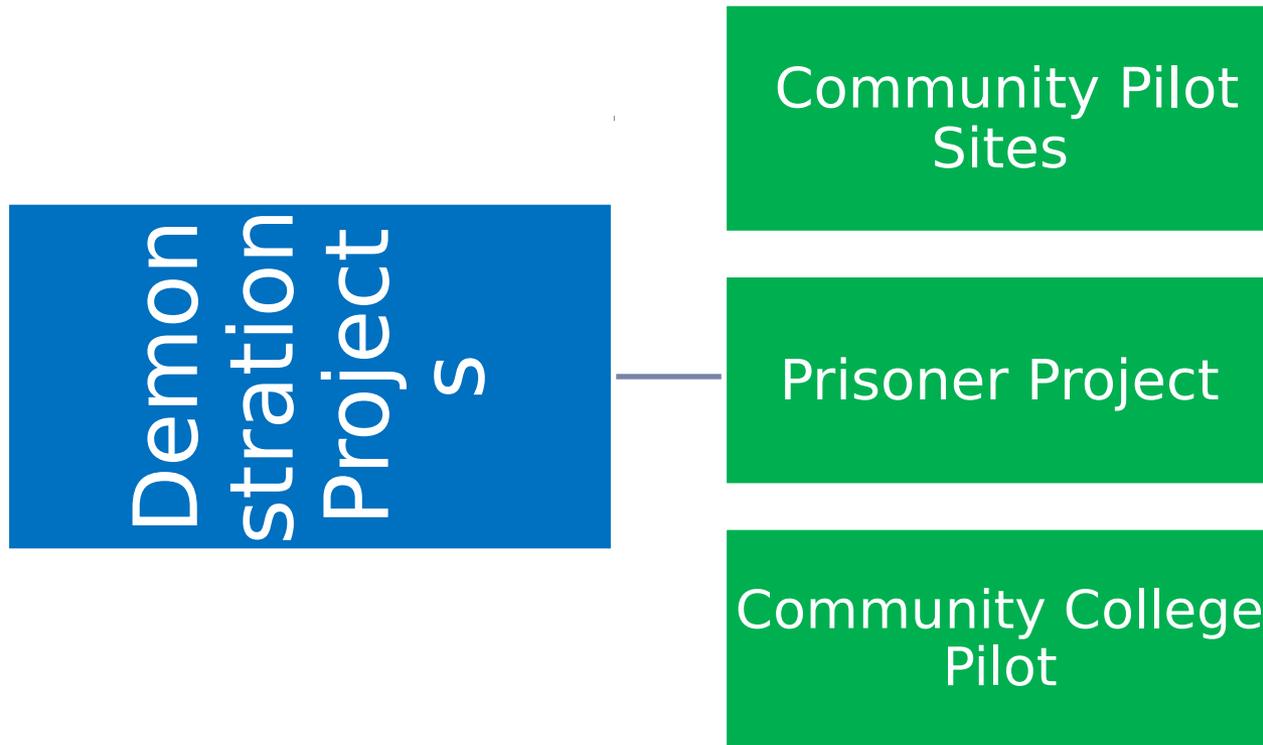
On-line updates to client information



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MBA Outreach





Technology Issues

- On-time, on-budget software completion
- Development staff isolation
- No data reporting portal
- Limited data production of warehouse data
- No linkages to other data sets; could not test key research questions
- Proved data tabulations, not access to data

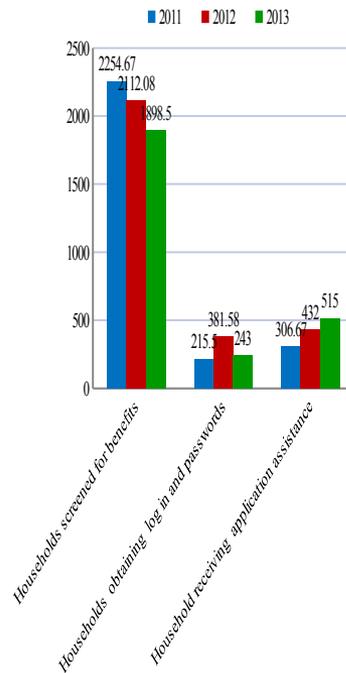


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Impact

Monthly Average MBA Activity, MBA Pilot Sites in Southeastern Michigan, 2011 - 2013



Percentage of Benefit Applications Made Using MI Bridges, 2012-2013





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Expansion

Department of Human Services

- Decentralize DHS staff, services
- Reestablish DHS Community Partner Program
- Align new Community Partners with MBA Community Outreach Pilot Sites

AmeriCorps, UWSEM, and MAUW

- Place AmeriCorps members at United Way Sites
- Access benefits through 2-1-1
- AmeriCorps members recruit new community partners



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Sustainability

- MBA integrated into routine community partner services
- Community partner service levels:
 - Navigator Partners—provide support and assistance to clients
 - Access Partners—provide on-line access only
- DHS Community Resource Coordinators collaborate locally with community partners
- Community Colleges continuing as part of BACC program
- Prisoner Project's future is questionable



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■ Program Lessons Learned

- Expect a steep learning curve
- Spread seed money liberally
- Strong commitment and leadership from the public sector is essential
- Use data to manage and assess the program
- Get data commitments up front
- Train community partners to manage their own data



■ Technology Lessons Learned

- Require strong commitment to data production and use from public sector leadership
- Promote communications between software developers and program developers
- Create linkages between private sector and public sector data resources
- Promote timely data reporting
- Focus on analytics



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