

## Engaging Volunteers: George Washington University

**Who:** The George Washington University Office of External Affairs and School of Public Health and Health Services (GW).

**What:** A multi-faceted volunteer campaign in the District of Columbia involving students from the university.

**When:** Over the course of the spring semester of 2012, students from the School of Public Health and Health Services worked to plan and implement an outreach strategy alongside staff at GW and HMHB.

**Where:** The students conducted an assessment for the District of Columbia by looking at ward-specific data, including live births, rates of infant mortality, percentages of low birth weight, and other birth outcome data to determine the parts of the city that were in the highest need. They then targeted the majority of their outreach to wards 5, 7 and 8.

**Why:** The objective of the campaign was to connect more pregnant women and moms with babies under one to critical health and safety information through text4baby, as the District of Columbia has high infant mortality rates and high percentages of low birth-weight babies, particularly in the predetermined wards. It was also a good opportunity for interested students to get more involved in their surrounding community, and learn more about maternal and child health issues that their extended community faces.

**How:** GW graduate students pursuing a Masters of Public Health, who were interested in focusing on text4baby community outreach to satisfy their practicum requirement for graduation, developed an outreach strategy to try to reach more women in the District of Columbia with information about text4baby. A number of activities were implemented aimed at increasing text4baby enrollment especially in underserved and targeted areas.

### Information table at a Federally Qualified Health Center

Students from GW staffed an information table at a federally qualified health center that included text4baby promotional materials to encourage community members to enroll in the service.

### George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services Community Day of Service

To kick-off National Public Health Week with an annual *Day of Service* focused on promotion in targeted wards. After receiving an orientation with talking points from text4baby staff and instructions in a brief training session, teams of students distributed outreach materials to local businesses, health centers and other community gathering places to promote the service and disseminate information to residents.

### Poster Contest

Faculty at George Washington University worked with HMHB to host a poster contest. Participants submitted unique poster designs to be co-branded with GW and text4baby to distribute throughout DC.

**Health Center Engagement-** Site visits were made to key health centers in the target wards to engage service providers. Students discussed text4baby and its benefits for patients. Students also delivered text4baby promotional materials, so that providers at these healthcare clinics could hand them out to incoming patients.

## Results

### GW Day of Service

The engaged 37 students informed nearly 100 businesses about text4baby. Of these, 90 agreed to display text4baby promotional materials or distribute them to clients and community members. The students analyzed enrollment data from February 11, 2012 through the event on March 31, 2012, and found an increase in enrollment of about 19.7% in the specific wards they targeted. Students also completed event surveys to enhance future efforts for the Day of Service at GW. Check out the [full report](#) compiled by GW students to learn about their strategy and implementation plan.

**WHAT IF...with just one**

**DAY of SERVICE**

GWU SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES

MARCH 31 2012

**You** could help expectant mothers give their babies  
the best possible start in life.

