



Our evaluations were informal and unfocused. BEC helped us design a comprehensive evaluation system for one program that was implemented during BEC. This now allows us to apply the learned methods to our other programs. BEC Participant, Executive Leader, Class of 2015

I think that overall, we're being more deliberate about incorporating evaluation and evaluative thinking into our various initiatives, which I expect to improve the quality of what we do. BEC Participant, Executive Leader, Class of 2015

BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT Class of 2015

Submitted To:
**HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING
NONPROFIT SUPPORT PROGRAM**

Submitted By:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, BEC 2014 - 2015

The Building Evaluation Capacity (BEC) program was initiated in the fall of 2006 by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Nonprofit Support Program (NSP). It was designed to give participating organizations the knowledge, skills and tools to evaluate, improve and communicate about their work. The Class of 2015 is the fourth group of Hartford-area nonprofit organizations to participate. BEC

is a multi-year program that includes evaluation capacity development for selected organizations and ongoing study for participating organizations that have completed the initial evaluation capacity building work. The evaluation capacity building training operates in two phases (phase I = initial training and evaluation project design, phase II = project implementation and continued training).

Each phase is designed to provide comprehensive, long-term training and coaching to increase both evaluation capacity and organization-wide use of evaluative thinking for participating organizations. The program, adapted from the similar Bruner Foundation-sponsored

Rochester Effectiveness Partnership* was developed and delivered by Anita Baker, Ed. D., an independent evaluation consultant, who has lead four other similar projects in Rochester, New York; New York City (2); and the Metrowest (Framingham) area of Boston, Massachusetts. From January 2014 through June 2015, BEC was delivered to representatives of 11 selected nonprofit organizations.

The BEC Class of 2015

Billings Forge Community Works
Capital Workforce Partners
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford
Children's Law Center of Connecticut
ConnectiKids Inc.
CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Girl Scouts of Connecticut
HartBeat Ensemble
Hartford Community Loan Fund
Hartford Food System, Inc.
YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford, Inc.

Class of 2015 BEC participants, like those from the Classes of 2008, 2010, and 2013 delivered different types of services and were broadly representative of Hartford area nonprofit organizations.

NSP initially undertook the development of BEC because evaluation was an area of organizational capacity the NSP had not been addressing. Many organizations were requesting help with evaluation in response to requirements by their funders to collect data and answer outcomes-focused questions. It was felt that helping them to not only obtain better data, but also to use those data for decision-making would benefit the organizations. NSP elected to both modify and continue BEC for a fourth class (see next section), because the previous classes had been well received and participating organizations clearly benefitted from BEC.

* REP was a self-governing partnership of funders, nonprofit service provider organizations and evaluation professionals committed to increasing knowledge and use of participatory program evaluation through comprehensive training and guided evaluation projects

** Though Class of 2015 team sizes varied from two to four members, every participant organization included at least one senior official capable of decision-making (seven of the 11 organizations directly involved their Executive Directors in the training). The organizations also involved individuals from various positions (e.g., Special Projects Manager, Director of Grant Management) according to their own needs for training.

As with the Classes of 2008, 2010 and 2013, the phase I training period for the Class of 2015 participants included didactic training sessions, with opportunities to practice and apply new skills. The BEC Class of 2015 like those from the Class of 2013 participated in the condensed six-session schedule, which had been restructured after the Class of 2010, to include more emphasis on evaluation planning and data analysis. Phase I culminated with the development by each participating organization of a rigorous evaluation design for a selected program of its own. Phase II focused on the implementation of the evaluation project and included five team consultation sessions and four group sessions where there was both review of phase I concepts and delivery of new, more advanced topics such as effective use of pre- post-surveys, data visualization, organization-wide integration of evaluative thinking.

The ultimate outcomes for all BEC participants were enhanced knowledge about evaluation, enhanced skill to conduct evaluation and use evaluation findings (for decision-making and fund development), extension (“Ripple”) of evaluation skills to other projects and personnel and enhanced knowledge about and use of evaluative thinking in organizations.

By all accounts, the BEC program was very productive for the Class of 2015. All 11 organizations were regularly represented throughout both phases (though not consistently by all executive leaders). Participants from all teams demonstrated they were learning about evaluation and developing evaluative capacity. Their feedback regarding BEC program design, content and especially their own evaluation projects was very positive. As had their predecessors in prior classes, those from 2015 gained or honed numerous evaluation-related skills such as: ability to ask clear evaluation questions, design and select data collection methods and construct evaluation designs. Most importantly every organization of the Class of 2015 conducted initial assessments of evaluative thinking, formulated plans to enhance it and extend what they learned about evaluation, and all completed evaluations of their own designs. Their evaluations included collection and analysis of data, summarization and presentation of findings and development of proposed action steps. Additionally, a total of 6 of the Class of 2015 opted to participate in the 2015-16 alumni group. Each will involve new participants from their organizations, and all will continue doing evaluation-related project work.

The evaluation work of the Class of 2015 participants was particularly useful and noteworthy. All project work had to conform to standard professional evaluation practice and it clearly showed that BEC participants were able to apply what they learned. Project reports were presented at the final BEC conference to BEC organizations and the Hartford Foundation’s NSP stakeholders. Those in attendance, including many senior Hartford Foundation staff were consistently impressed with both the clarity and thoroughness of the efforts. Most importantly, all of the organizations obtained information through their evaluation projects that informed their ongoing work. All were able to identify program-specific action steps in direct response to their findings and most had initiated at least some of those actions before their participation in the Class of 2015 ended.

As they concluded their work, Class of 2015 participants assessed their own abilities to extend (“Ripple”) the work beyond the class trainees, and they considered integration of evaluative thinking at their organizations. Most participants (96%) indicated BEC had prepared them to extend their learning. Each organization indicated they had extended the training at least *a little* for example by involving others in the evaluation projects, presenting findings to board and staff, and using evaluation skills to address additional evaluation needs at their organizations (like revising survey instruments or writing evaluation design sections into new proposals). Additionally, on the final survey, 100% of participants indicated that participating in BEC had enhanced evaluative thinking in their organizations and they were able to provide specific examples to clarify and substantiate the changes in their use and understanding of evaluative thinking as it applies to multiple organization capacities.

Conclusion

The Class of 2015 reinforced that their BEC experiences had been important on multiple levels and accomplished what the program was designed to do. Specifically, participants indicated BEC was important because it helped them: understand participatory evaluation; improve the quality of data they attain; to look at their programs from different perspectives; to increase capacity to analyze data about the outcomes they value; to build evaluation into the program planning process; and to revise programs based on real data. Additionally three-fourths of the organizations indicated they are *very likely* to continue or expand their evaluation work. Though it was not a specific intended outcome of BEC, as for past classes, the one area that participants identified as insufficient was attention to relationship-building and networking across partnership agencies.

Next Steps and Issues for Further Consideration

A new alumni group will be initiated for the six Class of 2015 organizations that opted to participate (see the full report for details) and plans for a new class are under serious consideration. Continued vigilance will be necessary to ensure that Alumni Group participants get meaningful opportunities to analyze real data from their own organization programs, continue to successfully plan for and conduct evaluations, and integrate new staff into BEC. It will also be important to attract and inform a suitable new cohort of participants, to develop productive strategies for supporting their needs and interests, and to help them stay focused on development of evaluation capacity while also managing other organizational demands. Both the alumni group and any future BEC classes will need assistance to handle the rigor required to fully analyze evaluation data, utilize new available tools to collect, analyze and present data, and summarize and use findings. NSP staff and consultants will need to continue to strive to integrate new/developing technologies such as mapping, where possible, and to add and support activities such as the Evaluation Roundtable¹ to increase organizational connections and networking while remaining focused on ensuring that BEC increases evaluation capacity and enhances evaluative thinking for participating organizations.

¹ The NSP Evaluation Roundtable was a new opportunity for area nonprofit organizations and evaluation professionals to meet, share and learn about evaluation practice.

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I. INTRODUCTION

BEC was initiated in the fall of 2006 by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Nonprofit Support Program.

It was designed to give participating organizations the knowledge, skills and tools to evaluate, improve and communicate about their work (see desired outcomes in box at right). The Class of 2015 is the fourth group of Hartford-area nonprofits to participate. BEC is a multi-year program that includes evaluation capacity development for selected organizations (in this case, the Class of 2015) and opportunities for ongoing study for participating organizations that have completed the initial evaluation capacity building work (i.e., the BEC alumni group). The evaluation capacity building training operates over two phases (phase I = initial training and evaluation project design, phase II = project implementation and continued training). Each phase is designed to provide comprehensive, long-term training and coaching to increase both evaluation capacity and organization-wide use of evaluative thinking for participating organizations.

BEC Desired Outcomes

Participants will develop skills to conduct comprehensive evaluations and use those evaluations in their regular work.

Participants will complete full evaluations including data collection and analysis, summarization of results and reporting.

Participants will communicate results of their studies to stakeholders and use their findings.

Participants will extend their evaluation skills to others in their organization.

Participants will increase their knowledge about and use of evaluative thinking.

BEC was adapted from the Bruner Foundation-sponsored Rochester Effectiveness Partnership.² It was developed by and it has been since its inception, conducted by Anita Baker, Ed.D., an independent evaluation consultant who has lead other similar projects in Rochester, New York, New York City (2), and the Metrowest (Framingham) area of Boston, Massachusetts. From January 2014 through June 2015, BEC was delivered to representatives from 11 selected nonprofit organizations that are the focus of this report (see Section II for full descriptions of the Class of 2015).³

² REP was a self-governing partnership of funders, nonprofit service provider organizations and evaluation professionals committed to increasing knowledge and use of participatory program evaluation through comprehensive training and guided evaluation projects. Visit the Bruner Foundation at www.EvaluativeThinking.org for more details.

³ Note that the 2013-14 BEC program year included two cycles. During the first cycle, participants for the Class of 2015 were recruited and alumni study for the Class of 2013 was initiated. During the second cycle, winter/spring 2014, the Class of 2015 phase I training was conducted and Class of 2013 alumni study concluded.

BEC curricula and training sessions were re-designed somewhat for the Class of 2013 and then used with minor updates and adjustments with the Class of 2015. The streamlined BEC phase I training curriculum focused particularly on evaluation design (see following) while the phase II training and consultation were presented with more emphasis on data analysis (see Evaluation Report 2012 for descriptions of the related Initiatives, MWEI, Framingham, MA and Anchoring Evaluative Capacity, Hartford, CT, that informed the curriculum changes).

BEC Project Design Overview 2014 - 2015

BEC Phase I	BEC Phase II
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attended six didactic sessions with practice application activities * Attended one independent consultation session on evaluation design * Completed assignments to demonstrate understanding of evaluation and evaluative thinking * Developed rigorous evaluation designs for a program of choice * Presented designs at final conference to peers and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attended four didactic sessions on advanced evaluation capacity development, specifically data analysis and evaluation reporting * Actively participated in five customized individual technical assistance sessions focused on evaluation projects * Completed analytical assignments, conducted evaluations of own design, and summarized findings into evaluation reports * Participated in a critical read session, provided and received feedback from peers * Presented results of evaluations at final conference to peers and other stakeholders

*Please note that the project design for BEC Class of 2015 was the same as the one used for the Class of 2013. Individual lessons were modified slightly to enhance the earlier focus on analysis and to integrate the use of electronic surveys and databases.

As with all of the earlier BEC training classes, the phase I training period for the Class of 2015 participants included didactic sessions with opportunities to practice and apply new skills (see details, Section II). It culminated with the development by each participating organization of a rigorous evaluation design for a selected program of its own. Training during phase II continued on a monthly basis with four sessions being held with all participants together and five sessions being used for individual consultations regarding participants' evaluations, including their final report (for additional details regarding the history of BEC, its purpose and design considerations, please see prior evaluation reports, Class of 2008, Class of 2010, Class of 2013).

Throughout both the phase I training period and phase II for the Class of 2015, feedback was provided by participants regarding the program. Additionally, evidence of evaluation learning and evaluative thinking enhancement was collected. Specifically, the Class of 2015 participants completed brief assessment forms after every group session and responded to a comprehensive survey at the end of each program year.⁴ They also completed assignments to demonstrate their understanding of evaluation-related and evaluative thinking concepts and, most importantly, developed and conducted evaluation projects. This report presents a description of BEC 2014-15 and provides details about who participated, how and what training was provided, and what resulted for the Class of 2015.

Like their predecessors in earlier classes, participants of the BEC Class of 2015 achieved desired outcomes. They all successfully completed their training, and as shown in Section III they have conducted their own evaluation projects, begun to integrate evaluative thinking into their work, and initiated strategies to continue extending evaluation capacity throughout their organizations. Additionally, they have agreed to serve as a resource, as needed, to other organizations in the Hartford community. Six of the 11 participating Class of 2015 organizations plan to continue doing specific, guided evaluation work with the BEC evaluation consultant/trainer as part of the Alumni Group of 2015-16. Assuming sufficient community interest, a new Class of 2017 will be initiated January 2016. Details about Class of 2015 training, participants, results and issues for further consideration follow.

We have an organizational commitment to program evaluation. As Executive Director, I have been involved in all evaluation activity over the last several years. BEC helped to promulgate knowledge and evaluation commitment in the organization **BEC Executive Director, Class of 2015**

⁴ Please note, all quotations are responses of BEC Class of 2015 participants to open-ended questions on the BEC final survey.

II. BEC TRAINING AND EVALUATION COACHING

As described in the previous section, the BEC program included both training and completion of coached evaluation projects for the Class of 2015. The Class of 2015 initial training (phase I) took place from January 2014 through June 2014, and concluded with the successful development of evaluation designs. During the second year of BEC (July 2014 – June 2015, phase II), all Class of 2015 organizations conducted the evaluations they had designed, and developed evaluation reports. This section of the report provides details regarding implementation of BEC and feedback from participants.

BEC Class of 2015 Participants

A total of 11 organizations comprised the BEC Class of 2015. Table 1 identifies these organizations and provides some details about the BEC teams. As shown, this group of BEC participants, like those from prior classes, delivered different types of services and were broadly representative of Hartford area nonprofit organizations.

Table 1: BEC Class of 2015, Participating Organizations

Organization	Primary Service Areas	# of Team Members	Teams
Billings Forge Community Works	Community empowerment; access to healthy food; engaging youth; developing employment opportunities; developing economically sustainable social enterprises	4	Executive Director Grant Writer Director of Community Building, Director of Youth Development
Capital Workforce Partners	Workforce development	3	EVP and COO Director Strategic Development, Manager Strategic Development
Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Hartford	Multi-service organization – early childhood, services for elderly, youth programs, family & mental health, migration, refugee & immigration	4	Director of Planning & Development, Director of Organizational Excellence, Director of Asylum Hill Family Center, Development
Children’s Law Center of Connecticut	Legal advocacy for children	3	Executive Director, Deputy Director, Director of Development
ConnectiKids Inc.	Afterschool and youth development	3	Executive Director, Fundraising & Evaluation Coordinator, Program Director

Table 1: (Continued) BEC Class of 2015, Selected Organizations

Organization	Primary Service Area	# of Team Members	Teams
CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Domestic violence: counseling, support groups, emergency shelter, court advocacy, safety planning, and lethality assessment	4	Executive Director, Director of Program Operations, Legal Advocacy Coordinator, Cultural Diversity and Accessibility Coordinator
Girl Scouts of Connecticut	Youth development	4	Chief Operating Officer, Signature Program Director, Director of Membership Services, Director of Grant Management
HartBeat Ensemble	Theater for change	3*	Managing Director Director of Audience Engagement, Development Director
Hartford Community Loan Fund	Community development and affordable housing	3**	Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Special Projects Manager
Hartford Food System, Inc.	Food policy, fighting hunger, improving nutrition	3***	Executive Director, Intern, Program Coordinator & Policy Analyst, Policy Analyst
YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford, Inc.	Multi-service organization – youth development, fitness, health and wellness, sports, summer programs, arts and humanities	4****	Executive Director – Wilson Gray YMCA, Executive Director – East Hartford YMCA, Grant Writer, REACH Community Partner Coach

* One participant did not complete BEC due to maternity leave and subsequent change in agency role

** The Special Projects Manager was hired specifically to assist with BEC

*** Two different individuals served as policy analysts for Hartford Food System

**** Two initial team members left the organization during the course of the sessions, they were replaced by other staff

As they had in the classes of 2008, 2010, and 2013 Senior-level officials (i.e., those with decision-making authority) from the selected organizations attended and most fully participated in the Class of 2015 BEC training. They were specifically involved to increase the potential for both extending and sustaining evaluation capacity and evaluative thinking in the organizations. As shown in Table 1, the organizations chose teams of various sizes and involved individuals from various positions according to their own needs for training (e.g., Special Projects Manager, Signature Program Director).

BEC Class of 2015 Training: Phase I

The BEC Class of 2015 used the content and delivery structure developed for the Class of 2013. A total of six sessions were conducted, each with multiple hands-on activities⁵ and homework assignments that built toward the final evaluation design that was the culminating project. Training for Class of 2015 members included six 3.5-hour sessions, one 1-hour independent consultation session for each organization, and the final conference session (25 hours total).⁶ Each training session included some lecture-style presentation, opportunities for individuals and groups to try out new material and to work on applications for their own organizations, and opportunities for individuals within and across teams to confer regarding their work, evaluation and evaluative thinking. All sessions included homework that resulted in usable products (e.g., logic models, surveys, action plans) and as stated above, components of evaluation designs. BEC participants were also exposed to the concept of evaluative thinking, and how organizations can enhance and sustain evaluative thinking and evaluation capacity. Topics covered at each session of the phase I training period for the Class of 2015 are shown in Table 2 (additional details about training topics, activities and homework are available in the Evaluation Report 2012).

In addition to the training sessions, the evaluation consultant/trainer also provided individual technical assistance for all participants, as needed, via email, phone calls, or through face-to-face or web-based meetings. This individual technical assistance was mostly conducted to help participants complete their homework or directly apply what they had learned in their own organizations (e.g., to revise an existing survey, assess existing data collection strategies, or review a logic model or an evaluation design being proposed for one of their programs). Additionally, two organizations requested other evaluation-related help (e.g., assistance with grant development including evaluation design for another program, additional training regarding a specific strategy for staff who were not part of the BEC team).

⁵ Examples of activities include: program logic model development, trial development of e-surveys for laptops and handheld devices, analysis of quantitative survey data from 25 completed surveys using Excel and Survey Monkey; analysis of open-ended survey data; summarization of interview findings using completed interviews; level of effort predictions and workplan/timeline development using automated forms.

⁶ Due to weather complications during the winter of 2014, the first training session was shortened by one hour and the fifth training session was held at an alternate date due to postponement of an earlier session. The total time for participant engagement was roughly equal to that for the Class of 2013.

Table 2: BEC Class of 2015, Phase I Training Session Descriptions

Session	Date	Session Content
1	1/22/14	EVALUATION BASICS Intro/Importance, Terminology/Background, Context, Evaluation questions Evaluation stakeholders, Evaluation design, Evaluation logic Evaluative thinking
2	2/26/14	LOGIC MODELS AND EVALUATION LOGIC Logic model overview, Assessing logic models, Outcomes, indicators, targets
3	3/12/14	DOCUMENTING IMPLEMENTATION, DATA COLLECTION OVERVIEW SURVEY DEVELOPMENT Documenting program strategies, Data collection overview, Introduction to surveys
4	3/26/14	SURVEYS AND RECORD REVIEWS, ANALYZING QUANTITATIVE DATA Developing electronic surveys, Using record reviews, Basics of quantitative data analysis
5	4/23/14	OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS, ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA Using observations to collect evaluation data, Conducting interviews, Analyzing qualitative data
Team Consult		4/22, 4/23, 4/24
6	5/14/14	PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER, FINAL CONFERENCE PLANS Developing level of effort and timeline summaries Budgeting and paying for evaluation. Introduction to Evaluative Thinking (part 2). Planning for the final conference.
Final Session	6/11/14	FINAL CONFERENCE Development and presentation of final evaluation design project boards

Figure 1: Class of 2015 Phase I Final Conference, 6.11.14



BEC Class of 2015 Training and Evaluation Coaching: Phase II

During phase II, there were a total of 10 sessions. As stated previously, this included five individual consultation sessions, four group meetings for review and continued training and planning, and the final conference session. As in the first phase, each of the group sessions included some formal presentation and many hands-on activities, including opportunities for participants to present their projects and findings, in particular, and to critically read other participants' reports. Throughout phase II, as in all prior classes, the participants worked on completing their own evaluation projects – collecting and analyzing data according to their designs, summarizing their findings, and determining action steps.

The topics and activities addressed during phase II are shown in Table 3. All sessions focused on skills needed to complete the evaluation projects and reports and to prepare for further integration of evaluation capacity at the participating organizations. Specifically, the sessions addressed data analysis and reporting, including use of tables and graphs, and development of full reports that illustrated and discussed evaluation findings and planned actions. The sessions were also used to revisit evaluative thinking concepts and to continue planning for integration of evaluative thinking and extension of the evaluation training more broadly in the participating organizations.

The individual consultation sessions provided opportunities for each group of participants to report on the status of its work and to get individualized attention regarding data analysis and summarization and reporting. Every organization met at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for five one-hour consultation sessions with the evaluation trainer for discussions focused on their work. Participants set the agendas for the meetings so that they could practice actively engaging in participatory evaluation, and the evaluation consultant/trainer helped to keep the focus on progress according to participants' designs. Additional sessions were conducted via phone or at the Foundation, with any organization that requested additional help. During phase II NSP also conducted its first Evaluation Roundtable⁷ which provided many Class of 2015 members and other BEC alumni who elected to participate, with opportunities for learning more about data visualization and presentation.

⁷ The *NSP Evaluation Roundtable* was a new opportunity (2015) for area nonprofit organizations and evaluation professionals to meet, share and learn about evaluation practice. The roundtable is open to NSP BEC program participants and alumni and area evaluation professionals. Additional information about the NSP Roundtables will be made available in future reports. (See appendix for description of the inaugural session.)

Table 3: BEC Class of 2015, Phase II Training Session Descriptions

Session	Date	Session Content
TEAM CONSULT		9/16/14 OR 9/17/13 Initiating and implementing designs, evaluation reporting plans
1	10/15/14	Evaluation report development, survey and record review data analysis, effective use of pre-post surveys, introduction to graphics
2	11/19/14	Data visualization (developing tables and graphs for evaluation reports), Math for Evaluators
TEAM CONSULT		12/16/14 OR 12/17/14 Evaluation work, evaluative thinking actions, data collection and analysis
3	1/14/15	Using your findings, Enhancing Evaluative Thinking
TEAM CONSULT		Scheduled for 2/10/15 OR 2/11/15* Evaluation work, evaluative thinking actions, data collection and analysis
TEAM CONSULT		3/17/15 OR 3/18/15 Evaluation work, evaluative thinking actions, data collection, analysis and report writing
4	4/8/15	Draft Reports Due – Peer Critical Read Re-thinking Proof and Attribution
TEAM CONSULT		5/19/15 OR 5/20/15 Final consultations on evaluation reports and evaluative thinking assessments
5	6/10/15	FINAL CONFERENCE Peer presentations of Evaluation Reports: Questions, Strategies, Findings

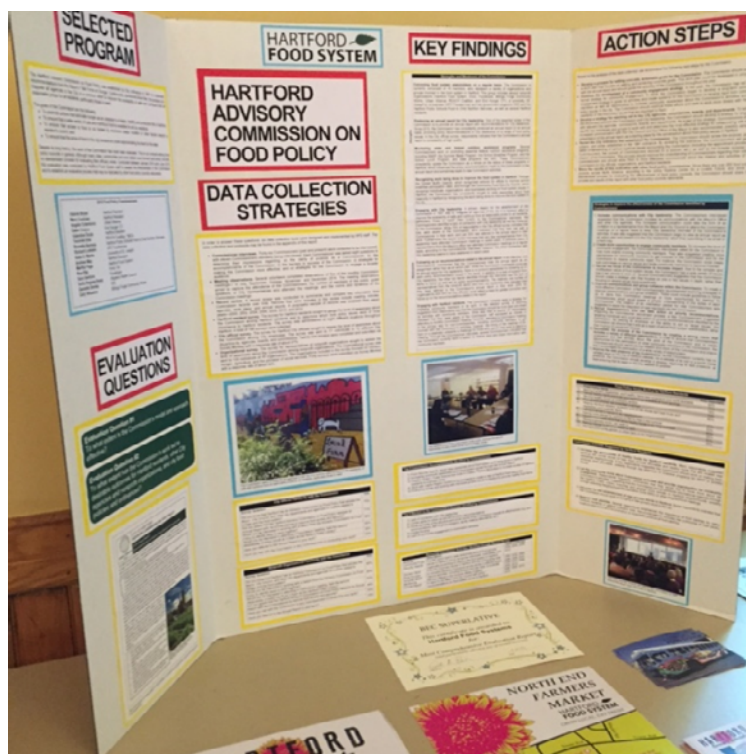
As phase II drew to a close, all Class of 2015 participating organizations developed and submitted draft evaluation reports and prepared for and then participated in the final conference. During the 8th session, participants read and commented on each others' work. Following that, each draft report was thoroughly reviewed by the evaluation consultant/trainer, and suggestions were made to strengthen (and standardize⁸) the reports, if needed. During the final consultation session,

⁸ As for all previous classes, BEC participants were all required to use a standard reporting format for their final documents. This included an introduction with evaluation questions, description of the methodologies used, summary and discussion of findings, and presentation of conclusions and suggested action steps. All were required to use either graphics or tables (or both) to summarize some of their findings.

final revisions were made, and the participants and evaluation consultant/trainer reviewed how best to present the work at the final conference.

Both phase I and phase II ended with final conferences. The phase I conference provided an opportunity for all participants to present their planned designs. The phase II conference provided an opportunity for all participants to showcase their evaluation projects, including findings and action steps. At both conferences, participants displayed their work using tri-fold project presentation boards and discussed their efforts with classmates and stakeholders from the Hartford Foundation and other organizations.

Figure 2: Final Project Board



A Note about Phase I and Phase II Attendance

Throughout BEC's history both group meetings and the individual consultation sessions have been generally well attended and always included representatives from each BEC organization. All members of the team are expected to be at all group meetings, selected members can attend the consultations in Phase II depending on project responsibilities. For both the Class of 2013 and the Class of 2015, group meeting attendance by some executive leaders was somewhat inconsistent despite reminders from the Foundation and the evaluation consultant/trainer. Additional inquiries with leaders and review of their survey responses are being conducted to determine how best to meet the needs of future CEO/Executive Director participants, and to ensure their full participation in and support for evaluation work.

Participant Assessment of BEC

On the final surveys administered at the end of each project year, participants provided summary ratings about BEC (see Table 4 and Figure 3). Overall, all participants (100%) indicated the training was *worthwhile* to them personally, and all the participants indicated that BEC was worthwhile to their organizations (including 63% who said it was *Very Worthwhile*). All participants described the evaluation consultant/trainer as *Excellent* (89%) or *Very Good* (11%), all participants indicated the assistance they received from the evaluation consultant/trainer to complete their final projects was *Excellent* (85%) or *Very Good* (15%), and all participants indicated the experience of completing a full evaluation project was *Excellent* (64%) or *Very Good* (36%).

Table 4: Assessment of BEC Training Value, (n=27)

Personally		For the Organization	
Somewhat Worthwhile	7%	Somewhat Worthwhile	7%
Worthwhile	33%	Worthwhile	30%
Very Worthwhile	59%	Very Worthwhile	63%

In addition, all participants reported they would recommend BEC to others if future classes are held, and about one-third indicated they had done so already. As shown in Figure 3 (following), they also rated key components/features of BEC very favorably. All but one participant rated both phases of training as *Excellent* (phase I 48%, phase II 52%) or *Very Good* (48% phase I, 41% phase II). As stated previously, all participants rated the experience of completing a BEC evaluation project and the assistance they received to complete their project as *Excellent* or *Very Good*. The proportions of participants providing high marks for BEC overall and the individual program features were similar to though slightly lower than for the Class of 2013, but continued to be greater than those from the earlier classes (see Table 5). These results provide further evidence that choices made regarding curriculum and other program changes were effective, but also illustrate the variances between classes. Though the next section will show that everyone learned about and developed skills to conduct evaluation, a few participants from the Class of 2015 never quite connected fully with BEC.⁹

⁹ Note that the three Executive Directors and two other Executive Leaders from three organizations, all of whom did not fully connect or attend consistently, also chose not to respond to the final survey despite repeated efforts to obtain their feedback. Other members from their teams were very engaged throughout.

Figure 3: Final Ratings for Key Components/Features of BEC, Class of 2015, n=27

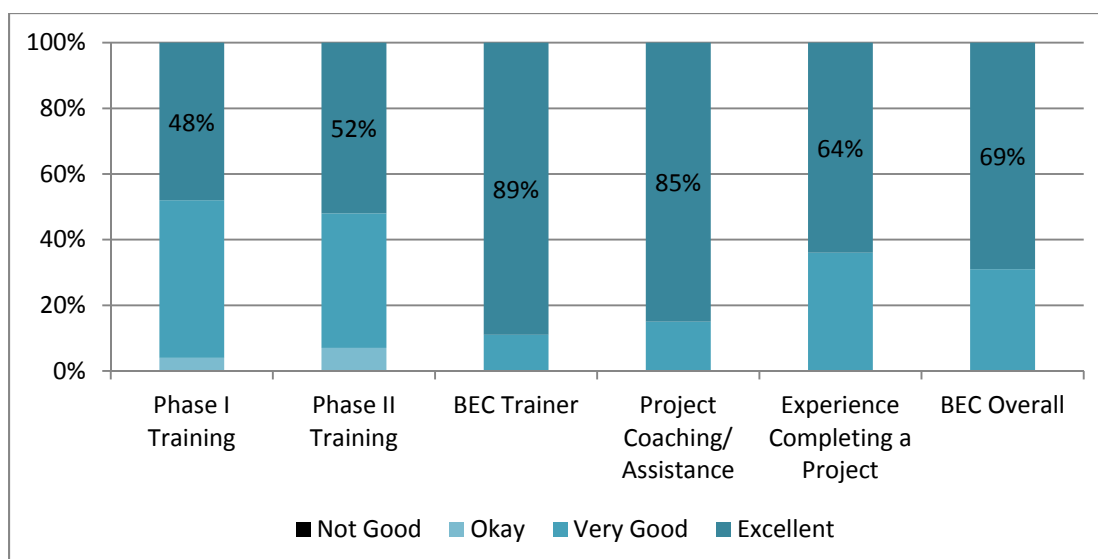


Table 5: Percent of BEC Trainees who Rated BEC Components/Features as *Excellent*, Over Years

	Class of 2008	Class of 2010	Class of 2013	Class of 2015
Phase I training	39%	32%	59%	48%
Phase II training	38%	35%	65%	52%
Experience Completing a Project	52%	48%	71%	64%
Assistance to Complete Project	83%	65%	97%	85%

Longer-Term Importance of BEC

BEC participants were also asked about changes in their level of involvement on the final survey. About one-quarter of the respondents indicated they had frequently been involved in evaluations at their organizations before BEC. By the time BEC concluded, almost half (48%) reported they were frequently involved in evaluation work at their organizations. Additionally, 74% of respondents indicated their organizations were *very likely* to continue or expand evaluation work (the rest thought their organizations were *somewhat likely* to do so).

We are doing more (and better) evaluations as a result of BEC, and I am more involved in them (also as a result of BEC). BEC Participant, Executive Leader, Class of 2015

We are now doing more electronic data collection; there is a broader acceptance of the need for evaluation. BEC Participant, Class of 2015

Participants' BEC Experiences

Through their responses shown in Table 6, and more importantly through their completion of assignments and ultimately development of evaluation designs and completion of full projects, participants acknowledged BEC's importance. Table 6 further clarifies what was important to the participants.

Table 6: Percent of BEC Participants Who Reported the Following Were Important About BEC (N=27)

	Somewhat Important	Very Important	TOTAL*
Opportunities to learn about evaluation	7%	93%	100%
Opportunities for consultations from BEC evaluator/trainer	11%	89%	100%
Feedback from the trainer regarding the evaluation project	11%	89%	100%
Requirement to complete an actual evaluation for the selected program	11%	89%	100%
Writing the evaluation report	15%	85%	100%
Requirement to design an actual evaluation for the selected program	22%	78%	100%
Opportunities to interact with peers within the organization	33%	63%	96%
Reviewing the work of BEC colleagues	48%	52%	100%
Opportunities to interact with colleagues in other organizations	52%	44%	96%
Opportunities to showcase evaluation work	59%	37%	96%

* Note: The difference between the total and 100% reflects those who indicated a BEC feature was not important.

All, or almost all, participants indicated that all key aspects of BEC were *Important*, with most respondents indicating they were *Very Important*. Specifically, 93 percent of the participants indicated it was *Very Important* to have opportunities to learn about evaluation and 89 percent indicated it was *Very Important* to have opportunities for consultations and to obtain feedback about projects from the BEC evaluation consultant/trainer. Additionally, 100 percent of participants indicated the requirement to design and complete an actual evaluation and write an evaluation report, were important (more

than 75% of participants agreed that each of those were *Very Important*). Similarly, all the participants agreed that having opportunities to learn about evaluation were important (93% indicated it was *Very Important*). Reviewing the work of colleagues, getting opportunities to interact with colleagues, and opportunities to showcase evaluation work were also identified as important (more than one-third of respondents indicated those features were *Very Important*). More importantly, through the diligence with which they undertook all BEC tasks during each training session and in preparation for the final conference, they demonstrated their commitment to and acceptance of BEC. Like their predecessors, the Class of 2015 took on challenging projects with a range of complexity. They also used multiple strategies to collect data, effectively used electronic data collection and analysis tools, and summarized their findings in interesting and compelling ways.

Comparative Assessment of the BEC Experience

Selected final survey responses were also disaggregated by participant type to help answer questions about whether and how Executive Leaders¹⁰ experience BEC differently from other staff.¹¹ These results provide some initial guidance related to ongoing executive level participation.

Comparative results show the following (see also the appendix tables A1 – A5 for details):

- Leaders and other staff experienced and assessed some elements of BEC the same and some differently.
- Proportionately fewer leaders (48%), as compared to other staff (68%), rated BEC as *Very Worthwhile* for themselves, but proportionately more leaders rated BEC as *Very Worthwhile* for their organizations (75% of leaders compared to 58% of other staff).
- Proportionately fewer leaders rated either the phase I or phase II training as *Excellent*, but many more of them (75% as compared to 59%) thought the experience of completing an evaluation project was *Excellent*.
- Roughly equal proportions¹² of leaders and other staff rated the assistance they got to complete their projects as *Excellent*.

¹⁰ Each BEC team has at least one senior official able to make decisions at the organizational level, and some teams have more than one senior manager (e.g., the Executive Director and the Deputy Director). For the purposes of this analysis, the most senior member of the team was identified as the executive leader and all other respondents were identified as other staff. Note while all but one organization had multiple respondents, the senior leadership was not fully represented as leaders from three organizations did not answer. Their insights and experiences are likely different from the leaders who participated more fully in BEC (and answered the survey).

¹¹ The disaggregated data sets were very small so data were reviewed at the extremes (e.g., *Very Worthwhile*, instead of *Very + Somewhat Worthwhile*) where differences were more pronounced.

¹² Proportions within 10 percentage points are considered roughly equivalent.

- About half of the key BEC features we asked about were identified as *Very important* by equal proportions leaders and other staff. This included opportunities for consultations from the BEC evaluation consultant/trainer (88% of leaders, 90% of others), feedback from the trainer regarding projects (88% leaders, 90% others), writing the evaluation report (88% leaders, 84% others) and interacting with peers in the organization (63% of both).
- Three other BEC features were identified as *Very Important* by larger proportions of leaders. This included opportunities to learn about evaluation (100% of leaders, 90% of others), and requirements to both design and complete an evaluation project (88% leaders, 74% others).

Both leaders and other staff, in roughly equivalent proportions, indicated that the following statements about BEC importance were *Very True*.

- BEC helped the participants better understand participatory evaluation (75% of leaders and 74% of other staff); BEC helped them improve the quality of data they obtain (75% of leaders, 68% of staff); their organizations now have increased capacity to measure the types of outcomes they value (75% of leaders, 68% of staff).
- BEC helped them revise their programs based on real data (63% leaders, 58% staff), and it strengthened relationships with their organizations (50% leaders, 47% staff).

Proportionately more leaders than other staff indicated that the first set of statements about BEC importance (see bulleted statements below) were *Very True*, but fewer leaders than other staff indicated the second set of statements about BEC importance were *Very True*.

- BEC helped participants build evaluation into the planning process (100% of leaders, but only 63% of other staff); BEC taught participants to look at programs from different perspectives (88% of leaders and 74% of other staff); and BEC taught them the importance of involving multiple stakeholders in the evaluation process (75% of leaders, 53% of staff).
- BEC helped the organizations realize why evaluation is valuable (only 50% leaders, but 68% of staff), and it helped the organizations incorporate evaluation practices into daily practice (only 38% of leaders, but 68% of staff).

The variations described above confirm that engaged leaders¹³ experience some elements of BEC differently which is expected given their different organizational responsibility. The findings also confirm that engaged Executive Leaders obtain benefits for themselves and their staff/organization. They do not answer the questions about why leaders sign on but then do not fully engage. Additional data collection will be necessary to more fully understand that and to develop strategies to promote their engagement or differentiate their expected involvement. These issues raised will be studied further, Fall 2015, as decisions regarding the Class of 2017 are made.

¹³ The three less-engaged leaders did not answer the survey, their feedback is not included in this analysis

III. BEC FINAL RESULTS Class of 2015

This section of the report presents a summary of findings about the BEC Class of 2015. Findings were compiled from the final participant survey that was administered summer 2015, review of all classwork/homework products, and assessment of the final evaluation designs and final reports. All analyses were conducted by the BEC evaluation trainer using an analysis strategy jointly developed with the Hartford Foundation's Nonprofit Support Program, in concurrence with the analysis plan used for the Class of 2008.¹⁴

By all accounts, the BEC program was very productive for the Class of 2015. In accordance with desired outcomes, participants demonstrated they learned about evaluation and developed evaluation skills by successfully completing evaluation projects. They also reported using their evaluative capacity beyond BEC projects. They gained or honed numerous evaluation-related skills (such as asking clear evaluation questions, designing evaluation projects, selecting data collection methods, collecting data, analyzing data and summarizing findings), and put each of these skills to use. Most importantly, every group assessed their agency's levels of evaluative thinking and identified what was needed to enhance evaluative thinking organization-wide. Also in accordance with desired outcomes, they developed evaluation designs for selected programs, which they completed, and determined and used findings that affected ongoing efforts. Details about skill development/learning, completion of evaluation projects and reports, use of evaluation findings, efforts to extend ("Ripple") BEC, and self-reported assessments of BEC-inspired changes in evaluative thinking follow.

Participants Developed Important Skills to Conduct Evaluation

By the end of BEC phase II, all Class of 2015 participants developed skills to conduct comprehensive evaluations. As demonstrated through their completed projects and their class homework assignments they could:

- Develop, assess and use logic models
- Document program implementation/service delivery (summarize recruitment, retention, target population descriptions, develop basic information tracking strategies)

¹⁴ The BEC evaluation analysis plan was externally vetted (original materials are available for inspection upon request).

- Design evaluations (clarify the purpose, specify questions, select data collection methods , specify timelines and levels of effort, estimate cost of evaluation)
- Design surveys, identify/fix bad surveys, determine how many surveys are needed, develop survey administration plans including those using web-based platforms, and develop analysis plans for use with Survey Monkey and Excel
- Design and conduct interviews, observations and record reviews and analyze resultant data
- Write evaluation reports, use results to inform action steps, and present findings to stakeholders.

While many participants came with knowledge/experience about various BEC topics, most also enhanced and added to their knowledge through BEC. By June 2015, all engaged participants of the Class of 2015 was facile with a common language about evaluation, and every group demonstrated they could apply what they knew to the development of evaluation designs and completion of evaluation projects. Most participants were also clear that they were incorporating evaluation skills into their everyday work, were providing enhanced evaluation capacity for their organizations, and were beginning to extend (“Ripple”) these capacities to others in their organizations. Specifically:

- With the exception of logic models, only one or two participants indicated they already knew BEC topics when they started. All or almost all of those who had not previously learned about each of the basic evaluation topics covered in BEC indicated BEC had helped them to learn something about it (many participants said BEC helped them learn *a lot*.)
- A total of 96% of those who did not know about developing logic models before BEC indicated BEC had helped them learn *something* (61%) *or a lot* (35%) about it. Additionally, 58% reported BEC helped them learn *a lot* about using Logic Models to inform evaluation.
- All participants who did not know about specifying evaluation questions learned about it through BEC, and about 69% indicated BEC had helped them learn *a lot*.
- All participants who did not know about developing evaluation designs learned about it through BEC, and 74% indicated BEC had helped them learn *a lot*,
- All participants who did not know about choosing methods to address evaluation questions learned about it through BEC, and about 81% indicated BEC had helped them learn *a lot*.

BEC Class of 2015 participants also reported that BEC helped them develop data collection and analysis skills, as well as organizational capacity. All or almost all of those who had not previously learned about the four major evaluation data collection methods indicated BEC had helped them to learn something about it (many participants said BEC helped them *learn a lot*.) Specifically:

- All or almost all the participants learned about developing surveys, interviews, record review protocols, and observation protocols through BEC, and more than half (52% - 62%) of the participants indicated they had learned *a lot*.
- Almost all those who, before BEC, did not know about collecting and analyzing the various types of evaluation data, indicated they learned how to do it (and more than half said that through BEC they learned *a lot*, especially about working with observation data).

Most BEC Class of 2015 participants who had not previously learned about organizational evaluation capacities indicated they learned about them through BEC — and again, in many cases BEC had helped them learn *a lot*. For example:

- All participants who did not know about incorporating evaluation into their daily practices reported they learned about it through BEC, including 70% who said they learned *a lot*.
- All participants who did not know about completing a full evaluation project and communicating about evaluation findings reported they learned to do so through BEC, including 77% who said they learned *a lot* about completing evaluation projects, and 70% who said they learned *a lot* about communicating evaluation findings.
- All participants who did not know about projecting level of effort for evaluation reported they learned about it through BEC, including 63% who said they learned *a lot*.
- Almost all (96%) of those who, before BEC, did not know about “Ripple” or about reviewing evaluation designs from external providers, indicated they learned about those strategies through BEC (58% reported they learned *a lot* about “Ripple” and 38% said they learned a lot about reviewing others’ designs).

Participants Used the Skills they Acquired/Honed During BEC

The BEC Class of 2015 participants used varying and multiple data collection strategies for their evaluation projects. In addition, like their predecessors in all the earlier classes, many participants have already been called on one or more times to put their evaluation skills to use for other organizational work, especially those related to surveys. More than three-fourths of the participants indicated that in addition to their BEC projects they:

- developed surveys (78%)
- created administration plans for surveys (74%)
- administered surveys (78%)
- revised a survey (70%)

Many of those participants analyzed their own survey data using Survey Monkey (63%) or Microsoft Excel (42%).

Participants are More Involved in Evaluation at their Organizations

As stated previously, at the beginning of BEC, most of the participants (59%) had only *Some Involvement* in evaluation at their organizations (22% had been *Very Involved* and 19% *Had Not Been Involved at All*). By the end of BEC, most (93%) of the participants were involved in evaluation (including 48% who were *Very Involved*), most were planning for ongoing involvement, and most had begun to use what they learned for projects in addition to their BEC work (see also sections on use of training and “Ripple”). They clarified in their own words that they had learned about what was involved in conducting evaluation, that they had changed and improved their strategies, and that they were committed to using evaluation to answer their own questions of interest and using the information to change strategies as needed

Participants Successfully Completed Evaluation Projects

The final project for the phase I training period was development of evaluation designs. These designs had to conform to standard professional evaluation practice, and they showed that Class of 2015 participants were able to apply what they had learned. Each design described the subject program and why it was selected, specified evaluation questions, and which data collection strategies participants had chosen. The designs also included projections of level of effort (i.e., who would do each task and how much time in days or hours would be reserved for them), proposed timelines for evaluation activities (i.e., when – months/days/seasons -- evaluation activities would happen), and plans for use of the evaluation results. All participants either developed new instruments to collect data, or revised existing instruments and all developed administration and analysis plans for their multiple data collection instruments.

During 2014-15, participants implemented these designs, further developed their analysis plans, collected and analyzed data according to their plans, and developed reports about their findings. All reports included proposed action steps. Tables 7 and 8 provide details about participant projects:

Table 7 clarifies which programs were evaluated and what evaluation questions were pursued. While they were quite varied, and obviously more complex for some groups than others, the depth of inquiry and seriousness of these studies was clear. The pursuits of the Class of 2015 were as substantial, or more so than those of all previous classes.

Table 8 shows data collection methods/choices. All participants were required to use more than one method, but each identified which methods made the most sense to obtain data to address their questions. As shown, all participants used multiple methods, and many undertook complex efforts utilizing multiple data collection strategies (all 11 conducted surveys – including 5 who did electronic surveys – 1 on tablets during programming – and 6 who surveyed multiple respondent groups; 5 conducted interviews; 5 conducted observations and all of them developed rubrics for scoring their observations; all 11 conducted record reviews; and 8 groups used three or more strategies).

As with the three prior classes, the 2015 BEC organizations did not substantially change their designs after they were finalized (June 2014). All took their projects very seriously and conducted comprehensive short-term studies including analysis of their own data.

*We have changed our method of evaluating our summer program due to our involvement in BEC. We have historically administered a pre- and post-test for summer, but this year we have decided on just a post-test. This is also the first time we are using observation in the evaluation of our summer program. The entire staff will be trained and all will participate in the process of observing students. **BEC Participant, Class of 2015***

*We've done informal internal evaluation, but the BEC process and final report produced was a much clearer communication vehicle for our Board and outside investors. **BEC Participant. Executive Leader. Class of 2015***

Table 7: Programs and Evaluation Questions Selected by BEC Class of 2015 Participants

Organization & Program	Evaluation Questions
<p>Billings Forge Community Works</p> <p>Youth Program</p>	<p>EQ1 What kinds of program implementation challenges have emerged and how are they addressed by the youth program team? What lessons learned can we highlight from the youth program's pilot year?</p> <p>EQ2 Based on the collection and analysis of participant demographics (age, grade, zip code, demographics), who are we serving?</p> <p>EQ3 To what extent are we achieving outcomes in two of our <u>Youth Kitchen Classroom program formats</u> (summer youth cooking series and in-school cooking sessions)? What <u>outcomes</u> are strongly associated to each program format?</p>
<p>Capital Workforce Partners</p> <p>JFES (Jobs First Employment Services) I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) Program</p>	<p>EQ1 Which types of participants (age, sex, race/ethnicity, training program) made good progress and which did not? What's happening that wasn't expected?</p> <p>EQ2 To what extent does the cohort achieve expected outcomes (enrollment, credential, credentialed job placement, job retention, earnings)?</p>
<p>Catholic Charities</p> <p>A Father's Business</p>	<p>EQ 1 How effective has the program been in increasing knowledge and skills of participants to establish a small business?</p>

<p>Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc. (CCADV)</p> <p>Court Advocacy Program</p>	<p>EQ1 How and to what extent are victims of domestic violence who are engaged in the justice system strengthened as a result of the Services to Family Violence program?</p> <p>EQ2 What additional strategies, tools, or services could be provided that would better prepare victims in navigating the system and staying safe?</p>
<p>Children's Law Center</p> <p>Legal Representation Program</p>	<p>EQ1 Based on staff assessment, does conflict reduce and co-parenting improve during our involvement? Does the level of involvement of the staff social worker impact those outcomes?.</p> <p>EQ2 Do the other attorneys who participate in our cases value CLC involvement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was CLC responsive, prepared, and essential in bringing about a resolution? b. Would they work with CLC again? <p>EQ3 To what degree does the family court value CLC involvement in a case?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does our involvement make a difference in the Court's decision making? b. What are service delivery strengths and weaknesses?
<p>Connectikids, Inc.</p> <p>Tutoring/Mentoring Program</p>	<p>EQ1 How well implemented is our program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent does the program understand students' needs/and or challenges and match them with volunteers appropriately? b. To what extent does the program successfully recruit and retain volunteers, prepare them for service and provide them with resources? <p>EQ2 How and to what extent do we address the needs of our program participants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent does the program help participants make positive connections with adults? b. To what extent do we Help empower participants toward success?

<p>Girl Scouts of Connecticut</p> <p>Girlz R.U.L.E.® (Respect, Understand, Lead, Empower)</p>	<p>EQ1 How and to what extent did girls exhibit personal growth (behavior, attitude, perception, healthy relationships)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Girls improve their ability to communicate effectively b. Girls acquire tools to manage conflict c. Girls establish and manage healthy relationships d. Girls are able to advocate for themselves and others <p>EQ2 How and to what extent does the program strengthen our ability to establish and maintain community relationships?</p> <p>EQ3 How and to what extent does the program help us achieve our mission?</p>
<p>HartBeat Ensemble</p> <p>HartBeat Happy Hour Play Reading Series</p>	<p>EQ 1 Does the program provide artistic development for HartBeat's Ensemble members?</p> <p>EQ 2 Does the program create opportunities for discussion between community and artists?</p> <p>EQ 3 Does the audience come early for happy hour and stay for the talkback?</p>
<p>Hartford Community Loan Fund</p> <p>Construction Rehab Program (CR)</p>	<p>EQ1 What are borrower perceptions of the CR loan program? What could/should HCLF do to improve the program?</p> <p>EQ2 What is the community impact of HCLF investments through the CR loan program? (loans originated, jobs created, housing units rehabbed, leveraged capital invested in the community)</p>

<p>Hartford Food System</p> <p>Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy</p>	<p>EQ1 To what extent is the Commission’s model/approach effective?</p> <p>EQ2 To what extent has the Commission’s work led to desirable outcomes for Hartford residents, other City agencies and nonprofit organizations, and city food policies and ordinances?</p>
<p>YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford</p> <p>Summer Learning components to the YMCA Camp Dakota and Camp Nowashe Programs</p>	<p>EQ 1 How and to what extent are youth progressing towards desired learning and youth development outcomes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Campers ages 7 & 8 are exposed to age-appropriate vocabulary related to camp themes. b. CITs demonstrate improved public speaking skills. c. CITs demonstrate improved listening and (verbal/non-verbal) communication skills. d. CITs demonstrate volunteerism/help others. e. Campers and parents complete family engagement activities. f. Campers demonstrate learning from group projects. <p>EQ 2 How and to what extent are our camp models effective?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are we serving enough youth from our target populations? b. Are families and youth satisfied? c. Are staff, including CITs, leaders, and camp directors, qualified and well-trained for their roles?

Table 8: Selected Evaluation Data Collection Methods: BEC Class of 2015 Participants

Organization	Surveys	Interviews	Observations	Record Reviews
Billings Forge Community Works	✓ _a		✓	✓
Capital Workforce Partners	✓ ^{**}	✓		✓+
Catholic Charities	✓	✓		✓ ETO +business plans
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc. (CCADV)	✓ ^{**} _a		✓	✓
Children's Law Center	✓ ^{**}	✓		✓
Connectikids, Inc.	✓ _a			✓ progress reports
Girl Scouts of Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	✓
HartBeat Ensemble	✓ _a			✓
Hartford Community Loan Fund	✓ ^{**}			✓ (mapping)
Hartford Food System	✓ ^{**} _a	✓	✓	✓
YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford	✓ _a		✓	✓

Key: (FG) = Focus Group

* = multiple surveys with same respondents, ** = e-survey

+ = collection/analysis of comparison data

a = multiple respondent types

Participants' Projects Were Comprehensive and Useful

As stated previously, all 11 organizations completed projects, and all of the projects were summarized into reports that were extensively reviewed by the evaluation consultant/trainer for adherence to evaluation reporting standards. As with the previous classes, a substantial majority of the participants (89%) indicated that the requirement to complete an actual evaluation project was *Very Important* (see Table 6). Project reports were also presented at the final conference to BEC organizations and the Hartford Foundation's Nonprofit Support Program stakeholders. Those in attendance, including many senior Hartford Foundation staff were once again consistently impressed with both the clarity and thoroughness of the efforts. Most importantly, all of the organizations obtained information through their evaluation projects that informed their ongoing work. The following are examples of some findings from the Class of 2015 projects:

- **Billings Forge Community Works** learned through their BEC project that the students involved in the pilot cooking classes are enthusiastic about them, feel like they are part of a team, learn about food and kitchen tools and practice cooking skills. They also found that youth who cook the most at home enjoyed the classes more and learned more than their peers who do not cook as much at home. Regarding implementation, most importantly they learned that their challenges are administrative rather than pedagogical.
- **Capital Workforce Partners** learned the value of detailed analysis planning. They found that only 49% of the participants in the workforce training effort they were evaluating completed the training and that many of the completers did not sit for the final exam. They also learned though that almost every one of their participants who did sit for the exam passed it and they learned that there was an important association between credentials and achievement: those with high school credentials at the outset of training fared better than those who had never completed high school or a GED. Lastly they learned through surveys that many of their participants had serious challenges related to transportation and the lack of childcare.
- Graduates of the **Catholic Charities**-sponsored 'A Father's Business' program reported learning more about business practices. They also reported that the program provided them with *a lot* of assistance with the key steps of starting a business, and all participants were able to construct effective business plans.
- The Services to Family Violence program, administered through **CCADV**, offers meaningful opportunities for victims of domestic violence to increase their knowledge and safety in regard to options available to them when there has been an arrest on a family violence charge. CCADV also learned that Connecticut stakeholders such as judges, judicial branch employees and prosecutors fully support the notion that Family Violence Victim Advocates (FVVA's) are increasing victim safety. Site visits revealed that FVVAs are easy to locate and

accessible, but there is a need to fortify the availability of information for victims and to foster stronger communication throughout the program.

- **Children's Law** learned that their Legal Representation Program is well received and effective. Judges are highly satisfied with the work and concerned that CLC attorneys are not taking on enough cases. Additionally they found via surveys that parents' attorneys found the CLC staff respectful, and they learned through record review of staff case assessments that parental conflict was reduced.
- **Connectickids** found that their summer program students were thriving. They had positive scores for questions related to self-esteem, social skills, aspirations for the future and other outcomes. Students also reported that tutors read and listen to them, make them feel special and safe, and help them with homework. Students also reported that their interactions with other adults at Connectikids were positive allowing them to talk about their futures, the importance of education, studying skills and college and career goals. Tutors confirmed what youth reported, but also identified challenges with current demands to help students with homework. They found they sometimes do not have time to get to lesson plans or read books with students.
- As a result of their evaluation, the **Girl Scouts of Connecticut** concluded that Girlz R.U.L.E.[®] is effective in its teachings. Girls are acquiring skills and tools to help them communicate effectively, manage conflict and develop healthy relationships. Their outcomes support their mission and they plan to continue supporting the program as they develop their new strategic plan. They also learned that they have to manage their own expectations regarding the impact of a six to eight week program.
- Through their study of the Healthy Happy Hour play reading series, **HartBeat Ensemble** found that their three part format for the program (happy hour, reading, talk-back) engaged participants. Though overall attendance was lower than desired, more than half of the attendees came for the initial gathering and over 80% stayed for the concluding discussion. Almost all audience members felt the play topics were relevant and 100% indicated they would recommend Healthy Happy Hour to a friend. They also learned that most of their audience members were new to the program and had heard about it by word of mouth (from a friend). They confirmed that their audiences included people with lower economic means, people from multiple age ranges (although many were in the 45 – 64 year old bracket), and both males and females, but were not as diverse in terms of race/ethnicity (76% of attendees identified themselves as white/Caucasian).
- The **Hartford Community Loan Fund** (HCLF) obtained important data about their construction rehabilitation program. They learned that the vast majority of borrowers were satisfied with the lending and loan services overall but also identified important challenges. A few borrowers expressed frustration at the length of the underwriting process and a few (13%) reported problems with their loan closings. Borrowers also identified several opportunities for HCLF to strengthen their capacity through training and education, and more than one-third requested that HCLF provide online access to accounts. HCLF survey

respondents also encouraged the organization to increase its public profile, to continue researching new loan products, and to consider broadening its geographic reach especially for customers who are already providing housing development/rehab services in the city of Hartford.

- Through a very comprehensive study, **Hartford Food System** learned that the Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy had both strengths and weaknesses. Among the positive findings they found that the Commission convened food system stakeholders on a regular basis and produced an annual report for City leadership. They also found that it monitored state and federal nutrition assistance programs and recognized important work being done to improve the food systems in Harford. Challenges identified included engaging with City leadership, following up on recommendations stated in their annual reports and engaging with Hartford residents. They also learned that Commission activities have led to several positive outcomes for city residents, officials and organizations including: the grocery store price survey, monitoring the summer meals program, school breakfast campaign, establishment of the Hartford WIC Advisory Committee, creation of the map of Hartford food resources, and approval of the urban agriculture ordinance.
- The YMCA conducted a comprehensive study of one of its key summer camp programs using many revised data collection strategies. They learned that overall campers and parents were satisfied with the camp program and that most parents would have their children return in the future. They also learned that despite overall satisfaction by parents and campers there were multiple areas for growth including vocabulary exposure, parent engagement, staff training and survey implementation.

While it was clear that the BEC Class of 2015 organizations used the BEC opportunity to learn about evaluation, they also obtained many important findings about their programs, as shown above. In addition, all of the participating organizations were able to clarify action steps in response to their findings, and most had initiated at least some of those actions before their participation in the Class of 2015 ended. All of the organizations developed new tools and evaluation strategies that can be continuously used and in many cases expanded for other programs. Additionally the evaluation tools and strategies developed by Hartford Food System were shared as a model to evaluate Advisory Commissions on Food Policy within their larger national network.

BEC Projects Informed Changes, Participants Used Their Findings

Like their predecessors in the prior classes, every Class of 2015 organization identified specific changes they made or were planning to make to their programs and to other organizational work as a result of their BEC participation. These changes included both minor and more extensive adjustments to strategies, staff or space, and in many cases increased attention to the need to

regularly evaluate work. **Identifying specific action steps from findings (rather than perfunctory recommendations) is often one of the most challenging tasks for those learning about and conducting evaluations.** As evidenced in Table 9, BEC participants clearly accomplished this.

**Table 9: Examples of Program Changes Informed by Evaluation Results
Building Evaluation Capacity, Class of 2015**

Organization	Resulting Program Changes
Billings Forge Community Works	Outreach strategies with partners were developed to insure that parents and families from Frog Hollow were involved in the programming. The program was new and a pilot so changes were not made per se, however, directions for future iterations clarify that program operators are to make sure that classes are bilingual, hands-on, and keep all students and families engaged with culturally relevant recipes that resonate with students.
Capital Workforce Partners	The JFES IBEST contextualized learning program is scheduled to be conducted for additional cohorts/cycles. Program operators are expected to search for better transportation supports and childcare assistance and to continue surveying future cohorts to get at underlying factors and barriers related to non-completion.
Catholic Charities	Because of the evaluation, a scoring rubric was developed for the business plans and all future participants' plans will be reviewed using it. Additionally they are going to look into women-only and mixed group delivery strategies for the entrepreneurial training and they will continue to look for ways to involve alumni in current training and to support them as they modify and expand their businesses. Contact that was established with banks and small lenders and determined through the evaluation to be very useful will continue.
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc. (CCADV)	CCADV is looking into ways to increase the number of FVVAS and to insure that there is more confidential meeting space located within the courts for them to do their work. As a result of the study, CCADV is currently developing a checklist, needs assessment too and service plan for all FVVAs to use. They are also investigating strategies to get more viewable information into Spanish and other languages for victims with limited English proficiency.
Children's Law Center (CLC)	CLC has added new materials to be distributed at the onset of a client's participation in the program. They have added a checklist protocol for staff to ensure all steps are taken to assess families and they have improved their internal survey with more relevant questions. CLC also designed and distributed simple yet informative materials for parents about conflict and how it affects children. They are collecting e-mail addresses to improve delivery and collection of future surveys and they are integrating mental health professions at different levels, not just on a consulting level.
ConnectiKids, Inc.	ConnectiKids has used the results of its survey as a base to begin discussions on program changes to maximize volunteer-student mentoring time, student/mentor activities, etc. Changes to be implemented 2015-16 academic year.

**Table 9 (Continued): Specific Examples of Program Changes Informed by Evaluation Results
Building Evaluation Capacity, Class of 2015**

Organization	Resulting Program Changes
Girl Scouts of Connecticut	The organization is working to set re-training dates for facilitators to share the updated evaluation design and tablet-based survey tool so that everyone knows how to administer the new survey. Girl Scouts is also planning to develop similar strategies for other programs and to modify its current organizational structure to facilitate implementation of and use of evaluation.
HartBeat Ensemble	Healthy Happy Hour is going to be on hiatus due to a variety of programming considerations (many raised through the study), including lack of audience. HartBeat will continue presenting surveys to all audience members for all other programs at the Carriage House Theater, while revisiting engagement and market plans for the reading series.
Hartford Community Loan Fund (HCLF)	HCLF is now tracking the speed with which they close loans to see if it can be accomplished more quickly. They are also evaluating online account access and payments, working to increase public profile and considering expansion of their geographic area.
Hartford Food System	The full report not yet shared, but from preliminary review of recommendations the Food Commission is considering more community outreach activities.
YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford	Surveys for the summer program will be revamped in terms of instrument streamlining and administration strategies, especially for parents. Staff will be updated regarding 2014 survey results. Strategies to enhance parent engagement and literacy development will be revisited in light of study results in preparation for Summer 2015.

In addition to the specific program changes described in Table 9, many participants were able to clarify how the BEC experience had resulted in some broader changes to their organizations' work. The following quotes illustrate these changes which include general approaches, more active involvement in evaluation work conducted by others, and application of evaluation strategies to other programs.

We are looking at evaluation in a more holistic manner and seeing how to apply it effectively to other programs.

We are currently designing and implementing better evaluations of our other programs.

We are now committed to creating an outcome department so that we can look at all our major and grant-funded programs.

I think that overall, we're being more deliberate about incorporating evaluation and evaluative thinking into our various initiatives, which I expect to improve the quality of what we do.

This sense of change applied beyond the individual programs. BEC participants confirmed that though challenging, they were prepared to ensure that evaluation capacity was extended more broadly in their organizations.

BEC Participants Understand and Have Begun to “Ripple”

In order for BEC to have the broadest impact, it is required that participants extend or “Ripple” what they learned through BEC. That was clear and desirable for NSP, the evaluation consultant/trainer, and all participant organizations at the outset. Throughout the BEC training, participants were briefed about strategies for doing this, and also asked to report about their “Ripple” plans and current activities. In addition, participants were asked on the final survey to summarize their efforts to date. As indicated previously, 96% of the participants who were unsure how to “Ripple” indicated BEC had prepared them to do so. In addition, all but one participant reported that “Ripple” had begun at their agencies before the end of their BEC Class of 2015 training (70% of participants indicated they had already extended the training *a little*, and 26%, representing 5 of the 11 organizations, indicated they had done so *a Lot*). Many were able to provide specific examples of ways they had begun to or would provide training to others, involve others in evaluation work, and initiate evaluation in additional programs using materials and strategies they acquired through BEC.

Participants also provided some specific examples of “Ripple” on the final surveys. In their own words, they acknowledged **the need to make evaluation more consistent and useful throughout their organizations, and to actively use their new/enhanced skills for that purpose.**

We were surveying audiences, but not thoughtfully, and not doing anything with the results. Now we know how to fix that. All our programs will get surveyed next year using the strategies devised for our BEC project.

Our evaluations were informal and unfocused. BEC helped us design a comprehensive evaluation system for one program that was implemented during BEC. This now allows us to apply the learned methods to our other programs.

We were collecting much of the outcomes data already – BEC forced us to compile and communicate it, which we hadn’t been doing well.

We have gone back and reviewed our evaluation methods for our two other programs and are currently working on formalizing and streamlining that review process based on what we learned in BEC.

Some participants also reported that they have **continued evaluation-related agendas, and they expect more change in the near future.**

This will be a higher priority in the fall of 2015. A more robust plan on “rippling” this through the organization will be developed.

We will continue to chip away until all our programs can have an evaluation tool.

I plan to present what we learned through BEC at a staff meeting. I hope the alumni group will be a way to extend what I’ve learned through BEC to other programs here.

Finally, their comments clarified that **participants recognized they could and should use their new expertise to benefit their organizations and strengthen their programs.**

BEC helped us to understand the process and what to look for also how to get better results.

It made us realize that our programs could be better and how inconsistent our evaluations are.

We found that there needs to be a project plan from the very beginning, committed to not only program implementation, but also evaluation.

The majority of staff now think in terms of evaluation and outcome when considering programming, coming up with new ideas and considering new grants/partnerships.

The participants also indicated that despite focused efforts, they need more resources, specific directions, and time to do this. Some will participate in the ongoing NSP-sponsored Alumni Group to address this ongoing need (see Alumni Study 2015-2016) and all will be invited to future NSP-sponsored Evaluation Roundtables. All BEC Class of 2015 organizations developed Ripple Plans before they completed their training.

Evaluative Thinking is Being Enhanced Through BEC

Evaluative thinking is a type of reflective practice that incorporates use of systematically collected data to inform organizational actions. Key components of *evaluative thinking* include:

- Asking questions of substance and determining what data are needed to address the questions.
- Gathering appropriate data in systematic ways.

- Analyzing data and sharing results.
- Developing strategies to act on evaluation findings.

As was discussed many times during the BEC training, evaluative thinking can be applied to many organizational functions (e.g., mission development, human resources (HR) decision-making, communications/marketing) in addition to program development and delivery. Additionally, during the BEC training, participants had the opportunity to conduct assessments of evaluative thinking in their own organizations, and to discuss ways evaluative thinking could be enhanced. On the final survey, 100% of participants indicated that participating in BEC had enhanced evaluative thinking in their organizations. Although more than half of the respondents (56%) indicated BEC had enhanced evaluative thinking *a lot* at their organizations, everyone continues to be aware that more efforts were needed to continually use and enhance evaluative thinking. The following comments provide clarification and evidence of evaluative thinking changes.

BEC helped us redesign our main evaluation tool and also gave us new knowledge and skills to design future evaluation tools. BEC also motivated us to begin incorporating more evaluative thinking into more of our work.

Our approach to program development has significantly improved. We are able to develop the overview and focus on outcomes and targets.

We are constantly thinking about the work we do, our logic model and why we do it, what we are trying to achieve, and evolving in how we do so based on evaluation. We are also focusing on involving multiple stakeholders to bring additional perspective, but making sure the correct format/tools are being used to get their feedback/input.

We review evaluation results periodically to see what changes can/should be made. We consistently discuss evaluation topics and whether there are other ways to assess the success/challenges of the programs.

In the process of undertaking new initiatives or when there are opportunities to shift the course of an existing initiative, we are developing the habit of using evaluation tools to more thoroughly assess what direction we should go.

It is more clear, from the Executive Director to the Administrative Assistant, how important evaluative thinking and evaluations are. Everyone is more invested in accurately documenting and reporting data.

IV. NEXT STEPS

The BEC training for the Class of 2015 ended in June 2015. Participants reinforced that their BEC experiences had been important on multiple levels and accomplished what the program was designed to do. The Foundation elected to initiate a new Alumni Group for the Class of 2015 graduates who opted to participate and to conduct an information session (Fall 2015) to determine if there is sufficient interest in the Hartford nonprofit community to establish a BEC Class of 2017. This final section of the report shows responses regarding the importance of BEC and describes plans for continuation of BEC.

Importance of BEC

The final summary items on the Class of 2015 final survey addressed the importance of BEC to participants. As described in Section II, all or almost all participants indicated desired BEC outcomes had been achieved. In other words, all or almost all participants indicated that it was true that BEC was important on multiple levels. Specifically, participants indicated BEC was important because it helped them understand evaluation, improve the quality of data they attain, increase capacity to measure the types of outcomes they value, revise programs based on real data, and incorporate evaluation into daily practice (see Table 10 following). Overall results for the Class of 2015 regarding the importance of BEC, like those from each of the prior classes were very positive. The one area that participants identified as insufficient was the attention to relationship-building and networking across participating agencies although one participant had an interesting response for that (see final section). Additionally, one participant indicated she wished there had been more attention to RBA (which is definitely beyond the purview of BEC, though BEC practices are generally in alignment with RBA practices).

Future Classes and Alumni Study

Assuming there is sufficient interest, a new cohort of agencies will be involved in the BEC program starting in January 2016. As stated above, an information session is planned for Fall 2015 and given results from this evaluation and any additional feedback from participants and other stakeholders, it is expected that the process for the new Class of 2017 will be very similar to that used for the Class of 2015, with additional attention to increased participant interaction and leadership involvement. Additionally in 2015-16, six of the Class of 2015 organizations will begin alumni study. Alumni study

will allow Class of 2015 graduates who opted in to continue their studies or initiate new projects, to include additional staff members in the training process, and to delve deeper into advanced evaluation topics while continuing to obtain consultation as needed (see appendix for schedule and training details). The following Class of 2015 organizations will participate: **Capital Workforce Partners, CCADV, Children’s Law Center, Girl Scouts of Connecticut, HartBeat Ensemble and Hartford Food System.**

**Table 10: Percent of Respondents Agreeing
that Statements about BEC Importance were True**

<i>BEC is important because. . .</i>	Somewhat True	Very True	TOTAL
It taught us how to look at our programs from different perspectives	22%	78%	100%
It helped us better understand participatory evaluation	26%	74%	100%
It helped us build evaluation into program planning process	22%	74%	96%
It improved the quality of data we obtain	30%	70%	100%
Our organization now has increased capacity to measure the types of outcomes we value	30%	70%	100%
It helped our organization understand why evaluation is valuable	33%	63%	96%
It helped us revise our program based on real data	41%	59%	100%
It taught us the importance of involving multiple stakeholders in the evaluation process	37%	59%	96%
It helped our organization incorporate evaluation practices into daily practice	37%	59%	96%
It strengthened relationships within our organization	48%	48%	96%
It helped me form new relationships with other providers in Hartford	48%	33%	81%

A Note about BEC Evaluation

As described in the introduction, BEC is an evaluation capacity building project that is also being evaluated. The BEC evaluation is a participatory evaluation commissioned by NSP. Analyses are conducted and findings are summarized by the BEC evaluation consultant/trainer according to plans reviewed by Foundation officials. All data are available for inspection by external reviewers and reports are disseminated to BEC participants from all the classes. For 2015-16, the evaluation will include summarized information about the experiences and outcomes of the 2015-16 Alumni Group. Specifically, Alumni Group participants will answer a final survey at the end of the 2015-16 program year, and their projects will be reviewed. Additionally, initial results about Class of 2017 and their evaluation design work will be reported as available. Presentations of findings from Alumni Group evaluation work and Class of 2017 proposed designs will be made to Foundation staff and other key stakeholders of the participants during the final conference in June 2016. The results of the evaluation will inform decision-making regarding ongoing Alumni study and other evaluation training opportunities sponsored by NSP.

Conclusion and Issues for Further Consideration

The Class of 2015 accomplished much and the program ended smoothly. Everything is in order for initiation of the new Alumni Group and plans for a new class are under serious consideration. The following will deserve ongoing attention as the BEC program continues:

For the Alumni Group 2015-16

- Ensuring that Alumni Group participants get meaningful opportunities to use multiple evaluation data collection and analysis strategies, to analyze real data from their own organizations, and continue to successfully plan for and conduct evaluations.
- Ensuring that staff new to the BEC project has effective experiences.

For the new Class of 2017 (pending)

- Attracting and informing a suitable new cohort. Consideration of involvement of new teams from organizations from the Classes of 2008 and 2010.
- Determining new (as needed) and/or modified strategies to keep all Executive Leaders more engaged in the program, by considering changes in attendance requirements, and revisiting team formation.
- Helping participants stay focused on BEC evaluation learning and especially their assignments and projects, while also managing other organizational demands.

For Both the Alumni Group 2015-16 and the new Class of 2017 (pending)

- Helping participants deal with the rigor required to analyze evaluation data and summarize findings for external communication (i.e., develop evaluation reports).
- Continued pushing to embed/institutionalize evaluation capacity and to inspire and support efforts to use multiple “Ripple” strategies (apply knowledge to other evaluation needs, involve others in evaluation, and provide training to others about evaluation).
- Integrating new/developing technologies (e.g., mapping, hand-held electronic surveying), and use of analytical software (including SPSS, Excel, and Survey Monkey) wherever possible.
- Adding activities to increase organizational connections and networking, including possibly having organizations conduct some evaluation tasks for each other as a way of learning new skills and also increasing interaction.

With assistance and support from NSP, the evaluation trainer/consultant will continue to modify efforts and focus on stated issues to ensure BEC increases evaluation capacity and enhances evaluative thinking for participant organizations.

This was a great experience for us and produced something of significant value.
BEC Class of 2015, Executive Director

APPENDIX

Table A1: Assessment of BEC Training Value, by Participant Type

Executive Leaders n= 8		Other Staff n= 19	
Personally	For the Organization	Personally	For the Organization
Somewhat Worthwhile 12%	Somewhat Worthwhile 12%	Somewhat Worthwhile 5%	Somewhat Worthwhile 5%
Worthwhile 50%	Worthwhile 12%	Worthwhile 26%	Worthwhile 37%
Very Worthwhile 48%	Very Worthwhile 75%	Very Worthwhile 68%	Very Worthwhile 58%

***Use caution with comparisons, small n's; Executive Leaders not fully representative**

Table A2: Percent of Participants who Rated BEC Components/Features as *Excellent*, by Type

	Executive Leaders n=8	Other Staff n=19
Phase I training	38%	53%
2 nd Year Training	38%	58%
Experience Completing a Project	75%	59%
Assistance to Complete Project	88%	83%

***Use caution with comparisons, small n's; Executive Leaders not fully representative.**

**Table A3: Percent of BEC Participants Who Reported the Following
Were Very Important About BEC, by Type**

	Executive Leaders n=8	Other Staff n=19
Opportunities to learn about evaluation	100%	90%
Opportunities for consultations from BEC evaluator/trainer	88%	90%
Feedback from the trainer regarding the evaluation project	88%	90%
Requirement to complete an actual evaluation for the selected program	88%	74%
Writing the evaluation report	88%	84%
Requirement to design an actual evaluation for the selected program	88%	74%
Opportunities to interact with peers within the organization	63%	63%
Reviewing the work of BEC colleagues	63%	47%
Opportunities to interact with colleagues in other organizations	38%	47%
Opportunities to showcase evaluation work	25%	42%

***Use caution with comparisons, small n's; Executive Leaders not fully representative**

**Table A4: Percent of Respondents Agreeing
that Statements about BEC Importance were *Very True*, by Type**

It taught us how to look at our programs from different perspectives	88%	74%	78%
It helped us better understand participatory evaluation	75%	74%	74%
It helped us build evaluation into program planning process	100%	63%	74%
It improved the quality of data we obtain	75%	68%	70%
Our organization now has increased capacity to measure the types of outcomes we value	75%	68%	70%
It helped our organization understand why evaluation is valuable	50%	68%	63%
It helped us revise our program based on real data	63%	58%	59%
It taught us the importance of involving multiple stakeholders in the evaluation process	75%	53%	59%
It helped our organization incorporate evaluation practices into daily practice	38%	68%	59%
It strengthened relationships within our organization	50%	47%	48%

***Use caution with comparisons, small n's; Executive Leaders not fully representative**

Table A5: Participant Assessments, *by Type*

	Executive Leaders n=8	Other Staff n=19
Organization has <i>Rippled a little</i>	38%	53%
Evaluative Thinking enhanced <i>a lot</i>	38%	58%
Will continue/expand evaluation	75%	59%

***Use caution with comparisons, small n's; Executive Leaders not fully representative**



Nonprofit Support Program

BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY (BEC) PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP OVERVIEW

The Nonprofit Support Program of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving invites your organization to apply to participate in the Building Evaluation Capacity (BEC) Program Alumni Group.

This program enables BEC graduates to:

- Learn more about advanced evaluation topics.
- Continue to work on evaluation projects.
- Effectively extend what they have learned about evaluation to other staff.
- Further enhance the use of evaluative thinking in multiple areas within their organizations.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Building Evaluation Capacity Alumni Group will be offered to graduates of the BEC program and will be led by Anita M. Baker, Ed.D., of Evaluation Services. The program will be conducted over a ten-month period and combines classroom learning, hands-on assignments, and project-based learning. Each agency will be required to assemble a team from its organization that includes at least one (preferably two) of its original team members. (Agencies are encouraged to include at least one additional staff member -- up to 4 team members in total.) All members of the team will be expected to attend all of the training sessions.

The program consists of:

- Eight workshop sessions (2.5 hours each, late afternoon with light refreshments)
- Individual technical assistance (2 consultation sessions + additional help as needed)
- Presentation of evaluation plans and findings developed through the program
- Time at each session to work with your team on your evaluation project
- Transitional consulting support following the final Alumni Group session

There is no charge for participating in this program. However, it is a requirement of the program that all sessions be attended in their entirety by all members of the team and that an evaluation project is completed.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Applications to participate in the program are due on **July 17, 2015**.

Program Sessions:

DateTimeTopic

September 30, 2015 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 1: Evaluation Overview

October 28, 2015 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 2: Using Surveys Effectively

November 18, 2015 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 3: Interviews & Record Reviews: Getting the Most out of Data

December 16, 2015 one hour meeting Session 4: Consultation Sessions

January 20, 2016 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 5: Including Observations in your Evaluation Toolkit

February 24, 2016 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 6: Summarizing Findings/Communicating Results

March 9, 2016 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 7: Data Visualization

March 23, 2016 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 8: Integrating Evaluation into Organizational Life

April 18-20, 2016 one hour meeting Session 9: Consultation Sessions

May 11, 2016 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Session 10: Critical Read

June 10, 2016 8:30 – 12:00 noon Session 11: Final Conference – Present plans/data



Nonprofit Support Program
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

New Program

INVITATION

*Do you struggle to demonstrate your impact to stakeholders?
Is finding community data for needs assessments or strategic planning a challenge?
Do you need to justify funding requests or advocate for action?
Then join us for...*

NSP Evaluation Roundtable **“What’s Your Story? Helping Your Data Speak”**

NSP Evaluation Roundtable is a new opportunity for area nonprofit organizations and evaluation professionals to meet, share and learn about evaluation practice. The roundtable is open to NSP Building Evaluation Capacity program alumni and area evaluation professionals. Future sessions and topics will be planned based on your feedback.

Roundtable Topics:

- ✓ ***Your Data-Your Visualization*** - Prof. Jack Dougherty, Trinity College
Learn about free data visualization tools and see how other nonprofits have used them
- ✓ ***Using Excel – A Free and Powerful Tool*** - Anita Baker, Ed.D., Evaluation Services
Hands-on learning about MS Excel’s many helpful data management and analysis features to help you assess and report about demographics and attendance
- ✓ ***Digging for Open Data*** - Prof. Jack Dougherty
Hands-on exploration of new and easy to use sources of community data
- ✓ ***Metro Hartford Progress Points – What have we learned and how can you use it?*** - Scott Gaul, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Community indicators can help your stakeholders better understand the region’s many needs

Bring your laptop or tablet to try out new tools and methods!

Tuesday, May 12, 2015 ~ 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Registration, refreshments and networking from 1:00 to 1:30 p.m. - Roundtable begins promptly at 1:30 p.m.

at
The Lyceum, 227 Lawrence Street, Hartford

To Register, please visit....

For additional information or special needs requests, please contact
Monica Kelly (860) 548-1888 x 1006 or mkelly@hfpfg.org by May 5th

NSP Support

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Nonprofit Support Program was developed to help area nonprofits build capacity and increase effectiveness. Its aim is to *help nonprofits plan, improve their governance and management, and build strong organizations so that services can be delivered as efficiently as possible*. NSP offers an array of training programs, grants for technical assistance, assessments, loans, and networking opportunities for nonprofit leaders. BEC is a special training program.

During all BEC programming for the Classes of 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2015, NSP has served as the administrator of BEC. Each year staff from NSP have handled communication and important scheduling details, and ensured that there was space and refreshment for all training sessions and consultations. In addition, program officers Amy Studwell, and Douglas Shipman (as of Fall 2012) together with NSP director Annemarie Riemer and special assistants Shirley Beyor, Florence Galbraith, and Monica Kelly reviewed and participated in training sessions, provided conceptual and operational support to the trainer, and generally oversaw the effectiveness of the program.