



### From the Director

Dear Friends,

The end of the year is always a time for reflection and gratitude about what we have accomplished together. We have been blessed at the Brown School Evaluation Center with so many [meaningful evaluation partnerships](#) and opportunities to build evaluation capacity. It's because of partners like you and our talented team that we will celebrate our 5th anniversary in 2020. We'll send more information about our celebration in the coming months.



Our first edition of *Evaluation Edge* gives you a peek into some of our ongoing evaluation partnerships. We are humbled to have the opportunity to support the critical work happening in St. Louis and nationally. Our partners are committed to ensuring their services and programs are meeting the needs of their clients and communities. They understand that organizations' performance and the outcomes achieved go hand-in-hand.

In every *Evaluation Edge* you will get to meet one of our outstanding team members – in this edition, it's Lexie Walsh. Our team has grown to over a dozen evaluators, methodologists, data viz experts, and strategists. I encourage you to take look at our [team page](#) to meet the rest of our team.

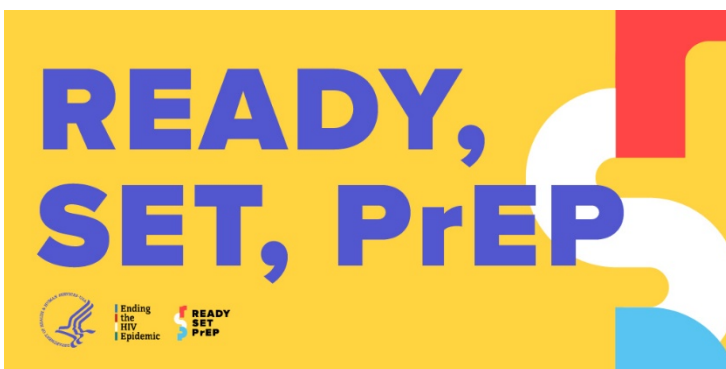
The start of a new year always brings me such excitement and curiosity for what lies ahead, and 2020 is no different. Next year will bring new opportunities for training and capacity building. We will be working with the second cohort of professionals in our [Post-Master's Certificate in Program Evaluation](#) this spring. There are still a few spots left so register soon. We are exploring a new Post-Master's Certificate in data visualization and communication for the fall. Also check out our upcoming [Excel training](#) offered through Brown School Professional Development.

Thank you for your collaboration. We are grateful to work alongside you to maximize your efforts and increase your impact. Here's to an exciting 2020!

In partnership,  
*Nancy*

Nancy Mueller, MPH

Assistant Dean for Planning and Evaluation at the Brown School  
Director of the Brown School Evaluation Center



### Featured Project — Midwest Capacity Building Assistance Network

The [Midwest Capacity Building Assistance Network \(MCBAN\)](#) provides individualized expertise, technology and resources to organizations enhancing HIV prevention services in the 12-state Midwest region. MCBAN is directed by [Dr. Rupa Patel](#), director of the PrEP Program at Washington University School of Medicine's Infectious Disease Clinic, and [Dr. Brad Stoner](#), Medical Director of the St. Louis STD/HIV Prevention Training Center at Washington University.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

### Upcoming Events

**March, April, May 2020**

Applications now being accepted for the [Post-Master's Certificate in Program Evaluation](#)

**February 7, 2020**  
[Leveraging the Power of Excel for Your Program's Data and Reporting Needs Workshop](#)

**February 14, 2020**  
[Presenting Your Data in Charts: Using Excel for Clearer Communication](#)

launched the Ending the HIV Epidemic Plan in February 2019. The goal is to eliminate new HIV infections in the U.S. MCBAN is uniquely poised to move this plan into action through supporting states hardest hit by HIV, many of which are within the Midwest. MCBAN's mission is to enhance the infrastructure and support individual- and system-level changes within health departments and other community-based organizations to increase access to and utilization of HIV prevention services.

The Evaluation Center is implementing a process and outcome evaluation to monitor and assess the MCBAN efforts across the Midwest region. We are working closely with the MCBAN team to develop data tracking tools and systems, understand and communicate the effectiveness of the capacity-building activities, and implement continuous quality improvement efforts.

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## Evaluation in Action

■ The [Healthy Schools Toolkit](#) was launched by [Health Equity Works](#), in collaboration with the Evaluation Center, after two years of research with local school districts.

■ [Coming Home for Good Report](#), developed for the [St. Louis Re-Entry Community Linkages \(RE-LINK\)](#) Program, provides infographic inspiration.

■ The Evaluation Center developed a [poster presentation](#) for the Healthy Marriage Responsible Fatherhood Biennial Grantee Conference in September, along with [Dr. Patricia Kohl](#) and [Fathers & Families Support Center](#). The poster shared findings from the [New Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood Family Formation Project](#).

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## New Partnerships/ Projects

The Evaluation Center is excited to be partnering with [Dr. Patricia Kohl](#), Associate Professor at the Brown School, and [Vision for Children at Risk](#) (VCR) on an exciting new five- year grant with funding from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

**St. Louis Project LAUNCH (STL-PL)** will promote the wellness of young children, from birth to 8 years of age, by addressing the social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioral aspects of their development. From 2012 to 2018, VCR led the local implementation of a state-wide Project LAUNCH grant awarded to the Missouri Department of Mental Health. STL-PL will build on this project to expand the geographic impact from two ZIP codes to all 18 ZIP codes in St. Louis City.

The purpose of the evaluation is to demonstrate the effectiveness of STL-PL service delivery by assessing processes and outcomes, and assess the degree to which the project improved outcomes for providers, caregivers, and children.

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## In the News

[Halting HIV's spread in Midwest is network's aim](#)

The Record, September 16, 2019

[Washington U. Grant Aimed at Stopping Spread of HIV](#)

U.S. News and World Report, September 10, 2019

[How to Create a Visual Style Guide WITHOUT a Designer](#)

Depict Data Studio Blog, September 5, 2019

[Evaluation Center Helps Botanical Garden Grow Youth Program](#)

Brown School News, September 5, 2019

[and Increased Impact Work](#)

## Staff Spotlight



**Meet Lexie Walsh,  
Evaluation and Client  
Services Manager**

*What is one thing you wish people knew about evaluation?*

An evaluation mindset, or evaluative thinking, is integral to strategic planning, performance management, and other key components of organizational leadership. This mindset helps keep organizations aligned, engaged, and growing.

*Describe a project management resource that you regularly use.*

Asana, the Center's go-to task management software, helps keep varied timelines and priorities in check. I can map out my work plan months in advance, tackle tasks by project or due date, and keep team members informed with project updates.

*Finally...What's your favorite type of cuisine (and some favorite dishes)?*

Not a cuisine necessarily, but I absolutely love bread. Nothing like a good loaf of ciabatta and olive oil.

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