Leslie Adams, PhD student in the Department of Health Behavior and 2015 seed grant winner, noticed that a My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Initiative to improve the life outcomes of young men of color lacked their perspective. The Durham County Government accepted President Obama’s call to action on the national campaign and planned to facilitate local efforts to address the educational, physical, social and emotional needs of young people (ages 11-21) spanning life stages from cradle-to-college. The MBK health committee was to work with local leaders in Durham, including stakeholders in government, health, religion, and non-profits. Leslie’s project used participatory methods to engage young men in the improvement of health outcomes for their segment of the population. Key activities in this project include focus groups to assess existing policies and participatory asset mapping, all held in coordination with local citizens and members of the MBK health committee.

Orisanmi Burton, a Ph.D. student in Anthropology and 2014 Seed Grant Winner came to Carolina wanting his research in race & racialization, crime & punishment, and policing & security to make a difference for the formerly incarcerated populations he’d been serving. For him, the Graduate Certificate Program in Participatory Research offers skills for putting the research tools of anthropology to work in support of community initiatives by and for formerly incarcerated persons. Ori partners with a New York City-based community organization formed by formerly incarcerated men to support their own re-entry and to help support those who remain incarcerated. Their mission, to learn first-hand and share with us, just how men manage the challenges of re-entry, how they learn from their incarceration, stay out of prison, be loving partners, supportive fathers, and productive tax-paying citizens. Ori’s research shows that these men produce valuable knowledge and assert political power. Findings from the collaborative research is of great interest and significance for helping families and communities, policy makers and decision-makers better understand the pitfalls and challenges of offender re-entry initiatives and related efforts to make communities safer and save taxpayer dollars by decreasing recidivism and lowering the direct and collateral costs of incarceration. Unlike in traditional research, together Ori and his community research partners develop interview protocols, collect and analyze data and disseminate their findings in ways that shine light on what Ori characterizes as the “undervalued and under-theorized work that falls on the shoulders of men and women who struggle to support incarcerated [and formerly incarcerated] loved ones and maintain familial ties”.

Certificate Students & Their Projects: Some Examples
Maia Dedrick, a PhD student in the Curriculum in Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and 2014 Seed Grant Winner, is part of a collaborative archaeology project based in eastern Yucatán, Mexico. One goal of her participatory research is to work in partnership with members from the community of Tahcabo to investigate life conditions for local Mayan peoples from the colonial period to today. Maia began by working to form a steering committee (consejo) of town residents. The steering committee then worked with the archaeologists to develop research questions and activities, create project goals, and generate ideas for community gifts as compensation for hosting the archaeological excavation. Primary means to co-create such knowledge with the community are oral histories, participatory mapping, and a photovoice project undertaken with local youth. As a result of this work, the community is producing representations that reflect local people's understanding of the town's past and collectively considering the relevance of their new knowledge of the past to the town's future.

Kirstin Frescoln, a PhD student in City and Regional Planning, and a 2014 seed grant winner, is engaged in participatory research project that aims to empower public housing residents in Charlotte, NC, to evaluate policies and practices of two initiatives related to resident economic self-sufficiency. With the aim of fully involving participants in the research process, she has worked with housing residents to develop the research questions, data collection methods, and reporting methods—choosing among potential options such as journaling, audio journals, and photo voice. Residents, who are being financially compensated for their work on the project, will also be involved in data analysis and data dissemination. This research builds off already existing relationships with the community with an underlying belief that “engaging with residents as researchers, not the subjects of research, will yield surprising insights and innovative solutions” for how to best achieve economic self-sufficiency in relation to housing.

Rachel Gelfand, PhD student in American Studies and a 2014 seed grant winner, devised a project that works through archival research and oral history toward a participatory approach to queer history writing. I am working with Vicki Gabriner, a founding mother of the Atlanta Lesbian/Feminist Alliance, at Duke University’s Sallie Bingham Center. ALFA ran its own archive out of a collective house in Little Five Points for two decades (from 1972 to 1994). Now this collection sits at Duke. Vicki and I have been going to the ALFA archives together in both a study of Atlanta lesbian feminist life and a methodological repositioning of queer intergenerationality. Our collaborative project is interested in the ways in which LBGT archives function in queer culture and how they can function
as a space for intergenerational transmissions of history. Beyond our archival co-learning, I am conducting oral histories with Vicki and other members of ALFA. We are working in diverse archives from personal papers and oral histories to FBI documents and the ALFA collection in a co-production of activist history across generations of queer experience.

**Sonny Kelly**, PhD student in **Communications** and 2016 seed grant winner, has partnered with the Fayetteville Urban Ministry's Find-A-Friend (FAF) youth program to provide artistic enrichment and facilitate performance-based activism for social justice among youth in their Cumberland County, NC. Since 1982, FAF has offered dynamic out-of-school programming that motivates and enriches youth (ages 7 to 18) with workshops, activities, and a support system designed to prevent court involvement and to improve their academic success, self-esteem, and behavior. Each year, FAF’s Summer Achievement Camp serves youth who have been referred to FAF because of past court involvement and/or other challenging social experiences. Confronted with disproportionately high rates of school suspension, expulsion and court involvement, these youth are especially in danger of falling prey to the School to Prison Pipeline. This project will connect the youth, their families, FAF staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders to a collaborative process of critical consciousness, arts-based activism, and community conversation about how the community may collectively consider the causes and effects of the School to Prison Pipeline, and collaboratively seek local solution. This Participatory Action Research project will include an artistic enrichment program that will mobilize Photovoice along with other artistic forms of expression to prepare and empower youth to act as advocates and activists on behalf of themselves and their communities.

**Melissa Kimathi**, Master's student in the **School of Social Work**. Master’s student, School of Social Work. I am particularly passionate about cross-cultural communication of all kinds, and about people being aware of and free to exercise their choices toward a collectively just and sustainable future. Research interests: Macro/community practice; arts-based community mental health promotion; international social work; participatory research; communication within social work and between social workers, professionals in other fields and the public around social change.

**Sarah Kowitt**, PhD student in the **Department of Health Behavior** and 2015 seed grant winner, set out to develop a community advisory board to guide my dissertation research. Specifically, I am examining how neighborhood level factors (e.g., neighborhood disadvantage) influence the health of individuals with type 2 diabetes in North Carolina. In order to ensure that my research involves the community and reflects community input, I have developed an advisory committee, composed of North Carolina
residents with diabetes. The committee will help me reflect on quantitative findings; design and interpret the qualitative research portion of my dissertation study; develop semi-structured interview questions; and provide guidance for dissemination of results (e.g., to whom should results be disseminated; through what avenues). The goal will be a dissertation that includes a community perspective on the dissertation research.

**William Maxwell**, a PhD student in Geography and a 2015 seed grant winner, is working with community expert Danny Bell to learn how American Indians can get involved with the North Carolina Botanical Garden’s Native American Garden in Chapel Hill. Our project involves conducting ethnographic interviews on plant uses and discussions with North Carolina American Indians regarding involvement in the garden. We intend to produce a report based on our findings as a road map to involvement. I will ask those I consult with, as well as Danny Bell, to write the report with me. We will also write short descriptions of plant uses to be posted alongside the plants in the garden. This work will help lay the groundwork for my thesis research about the wild-native-plants-based arts and crafts of Robeson County, North Carolina, residents. It will help me establish connections with people in several North Carolina Native American communities and learn the ethnobotany of the area from some of the American Indian perspectives represented across the state. The project will simultaneously provide an opportunity for these communities to work with the Botanical Garden on a more equal footing than in the past. My field of ethnobotany has a history of imperialism, extractivism, and exploitation that I hope my research will start to change.

**Elizabeth Melton**, a PhD student in Communications and 2015 seed grant awardee, described her efforts as follows: This project focuses on the fractured processes of school desegregation in East Texas and its lingering impact on the area’s public education system. In collaboration with local educators and activists, we are investigating how East Texans remember and re-story their experiences during segregation and desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s. As a critical performance ethnographer, my work utilizes several methods, ranging from ethnographic interviews/oral history, archival research, and performance as research. It is my goal to help the community to process this legacy by working with the community to stage or re-present these histories using performance methods. At this stage, I am completing the preliminary research necessary to better prepare for my dissertation proposal. I have been establishing connections with my community experts and identifying ways the community believes this research intersects with their goals.
Adébukola Oni, Master’s student in the Department of Health Behavior, is interested in Transafrican folk medicine and systems of care; erotic and womb wellness; conflict resolution; incarceration and liberation geography; border studies; solidarity economics. What I learn here will feed into deepening my involvement in co-creating community-driven alternatives to policing and incarceration and inequitable healthcare/food systems.

Shyra Peyton, Graduate student in Folklore Studies under the Department of American Studies. Folklorists study living traditions that cultural groups pass along through informal knowledge and observation. I hope to use my knowledge of community based participatory research to work with communities in documenting and presenting aspects of their culture that help outsiders understand the importance of stories, music, beliefs, dances, customs, crafts, and other artistic expressions of a group. Research interests: Expressions of Afrocentricity throughout the African Diaspora, holistic systems of care, urban folklore, and festivals as sites for identity definition and reclamation.

Tainayah Thomas, PhD student in the Department of Health Behavior, is doing collaborative research with Black men with diabetes to learn about the conditions that affect their health care seeking behavior and their practices of diabetes management. In North Carolina, the average life expectancy for Black males is 72.3 years compared to 78.1 for all North Carolinians. Diabetes is a leading cause of death for Black men and diabetes prevalence is highest among Blacks in North Carolina at 13.4%. Explanations for these disparities among Black men have been limited. She is using a community-based participatory research methodology, photovoice, with four Black male participants living in Wake County, North Carolina to gain insight into how social and physical environment, access to healthcare, and medical mistrust influence diabetes self-management and healthcare seeking behaviors among Black men and to promote critical dialogue around this issue to advocate for change. She will complement this photovoice project with medical provider interviews, in-depth illness narratives, and a community engagement plan.
Pavithra Vasudevan, PhD student in Geography, is carrying out a collaborative research project to investigate structural racism in Badin, North Carolina, a segregated town that is the site of a contemporary environmental justice struggle. Badin, ‘the town that aluminum built’, was a planned company town for workers with the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) and produced primary aluminum from 1917 to 2010. In partnership with environmental justice advocates, this project will record oral histories and gather audio-visual evidence with residents of the predominantly Black community of West Badin. The goal of the project is to examine how anti-Black racism has shaped working conditions, daily life and political struggles in this historic site. This project is a central component of my dissertation research, which explores the relationship of race and waste in aluminum production through a 100-year study of Badin using a combined ethnographic and archival approach.