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Student Opportunity: Research Assistants to collect systematic data in NYC parks

Seeking Research Assistants to collect systematic data in NYC parksPaid opportunity ($18/hour), variable hours per week including weekends, March-October 2017.Interested applicants should contact Gina Lovasi, Urban Health Collaborative Co-Director, Drexel University (gsl45@drexel.edu)

Background: Racial and ethnic and income disparities in childhood overweight and obesity persist and in some instances have widened. To reduce disparities, close examination of how policies and practices related to the built environment can intervene against childhood obesity for highest risk populations is needed. Parks are widely available and affordable community resources that can increase routine physical activity among children during out of school time. Although several studies show that parks tend to increase the likelihood that children will be physically active, few studies include analyses for specific race/ethnicity subgroups. There is also limited evidence on the key programmatic, social, and environmental features within parks that encourage physical activity. Such evidence can be used to guide park programming, design, planning, and funding decisions that lead to better health behaviors and outcomes for children from lower-income and racial and ethnic

minority populations. Therefore, we propose to examine park features and patterns of park use among children from different racial and ethnic groups (African American, Latino American, and Asian American). This study spans North Carolina (NC) and New York City (NYC), with data collection teams in each site. The overall project PI is Myron Floyd of NCSU, and the lead for the NYC-based data collection is Gina Lovasi of Drexel University.**Job Description:**Members of the field data collection team will be engaged in collecting park-based data to understand the availability and use of park facilities relevant to physical activity in racially and ethnically diverse communities. Each person should be committed to doing rigorous data collection, with documentation of problems as they arise. The ideal candidate will be detail oriented, efficient, and able to work independently. In addition, communication skills and adaptability to new situations will be needed in order to work effectively in pairs, and in order to respond to inquiries and other interactions in the field.**Duties:**Team members will be the responsible for participating in training March 10-12, 2017 to enhance data quality and consistency between NC and NYC based teams. Additional training may be required as the data

collection proceeds, and members of the team should reach out as problems arise that may threaten the integrity of the data or the ability to complete the work. The data collection team will work in pairs to conduct audits of park features and park use from April through October 2017, on both weekdays and weekends, and will participate in monthly check-in meetings for the NYC based team.

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