



**KENNESAW STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

# **BURRUSS INSTITUTE**

## OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND RESEARCH

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### **2020 Year in Review**

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[www.burruss.kennesaw.edu](http://www.burruss.kennesaw.edu)



# About the Institute



## Our History

For over thirty years, the Burruss Institute has provided applied research services to organizations throughout the state of Georgia and nationally. The Institute is a founding member of AASRO (the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations), an organization committed to promoting excellence and integrity in the conduct of survey research, and CUPSO (the Consortium of University Public Service Organizations), a network of university based public service institutes whose work informs state and local governments, nonprofits, business organizations and the media on a range of issues and challenges.

The Institute houses a group of skilled researchers with many years of experience designing and conducting research projects that meet client needs and expectations. The Burruss Institute offers a wide range of services capable of meeting the demands of the most challenging research projects. Research design and data collection services are provided using scientific methods that conform to industry standards and best practices. Organizations can be confident in using data prepared by the Institute for planning, evaluation, or reporting purposes.

The following pages contain examples of projects the Institute completed during the 2020 fiscal year, as well as descriptions of services the Institute provides. The Institute can provide turn-key services from start to finish or tailored services at each phase of the project.

## Our Mission

The mission of the A L Burruss Institute of Public Service and Research at Kennesaw State University is to mentor students and collaborate with faculty to enhance the ability of governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations to make informed decisions for the public good by providing relevant data, technical resources and skill development.

## Services

Descriptions of the types of services provided by the Institute are presented below. Because the Institute offers a variety of services, staff are able to develop customized research plans that maximize efficiency and generate the specific data necessary to answer a client's research questions. Many local organizations and KSU faculty rely on the Institute to provide applied research services.



### Survey Research

Planning, designing, and conducting surveys is one of the main functions of the Institute. Staff develop surveys based on client input and use best practices to ensure that questions measure what they are intended to measure. Surveys can be administered using several methods including paper and pencil, online, and telephone. A combination of survey methods may be used to increase response rates or to increase the representativeness of the sample.



### Needs Assessments

Government and nonprofit agencies need accurate and current information about the needs of their community to effectively plan and deliver services. Grant applications may require data to substantiate a community need. In addition, community needs may change over time based on demographic shifts or due to other social, cultural and economic changes. Needs assessments also give a voice to the public, service recipients, and other community stakeholders to ensure services are welcomed by the community and not duplicated.



### Training and Facilitation

The Institute is able to provide training for organizations on various issues by drawing on faculty from the university who are knowledgeable and current on the latest developments and industry best practices and standards. The Institute also offers meeting facilitation services to ensure that meetings progress smoothly and are productive.



### Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is vital to ensure your organization or funded program is meeting its goals and mission. Evaluation helps organizations know whether a program is functioning as intended, and if program outcomes are achieved. Successful program evaluations can identify which aspects of a program are working well and areas for improvement. Institute staff work with program staff to develop evaluation plans and track progress at prescribed intervals to ensure that programs are achieving their goals. The Institute provides status reports throughout the year to help measure progress and summative evaluation reports that detail a program's success. Institute staff are also available to consult with KSU Faculty members to develop evaluation plans for inclusion in research grant proposals.

# Survey Projects

## Telephone Surveys

The Institute conducts telephone surveys of citizens, government officials, and members of nonprofit and professional associations on a host of public issues, both locally and nationally. We conduct public opinion polls for newspapers, magazines and other media, on critical issues facing the citizens of Northwest Georgia.

The Burruss Institute has a state-of-the-art telephone survey lab with 23 networked stations. All stations are equipped with Dell PCs and use the latest Windows 10 operating system connected to uninterruptible power supplies and backup for data security and protection. Supervisors are always on-site while a survey is in progress and can access any interview in progress at any time. Training is customized for each project and includes pre-testing the instrument, continuous supervision, role-taking, and periodic review. In addition, our survey software provides excellent sample management, including the generation of detailed daily and cumulative productivity reports providing ongoing assessment of the survey administration.

### 2019 METRO ATLANTA SPEAKS SURVEY

For the fifth consecutive year, the Institute conducted the Metro Atlanta Speaks Survey on behalf of the Atlanta Regional Commission. The telephone survey gathered the opinions of over 5,000 randomly selected residents across 13 counties and the city of Atlanta on a number of quality of life issues and other special topics, including residential redevelopment, housing affordability and workforce training. Each year, the public release of the survey's results coincides with the State of the Region breakfast hosted by the ARC. The results are disseminated in various media outlets, and the ARC creates an extensive interactive online tool which can be used to review results for specific questions across selected geographies and demographic subgroups using data tables provided by the Institute.

### 2020 DEKALB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY

The Institute was contracted by the urban design company Lose and Associates to perform survey work for DeKalb County's update of their Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Institute implemented a multi-mode design that included telephone surveys with 300 randomly selected adults in DeKalb County (including both landline and cell phone respondents), as well as an address-based online survey of DeKalb County adults. For the online survey, invitations to participate were mailed to 6,000 randomly selected residential addresses in DeKalb County. The invitation included a description and purpose of the survey, as well as a URL address and a QR code. The QR code could be easily scanned on a mobile device or tablet, and automatically directed the respondent to the survey. One adult from each household was invited to participate. The total number of respondents across both survey modes was 676. The survey addressed issues related to the use of county recreational facilities; the use of alternative facilities and where those facilities are located; the reasons for using alternative facilities; opinions regarding the quality of selected aspects of county recreational facilities and programs; and levels of support for future funding alternatives for park related programs.



### 2019 FULTON COUNTY CITIZEN SATISFACTION SURVEY

During the fall of 2019, Fulton County government partnered with the Institute to conduct a survey of its residents as part of its efforts to measure performance on the six Strategic Priority Areas adopted by the Board of Commissioners. The Strategic Priority Areas outline the top-level outcomes that direct Fulton County's efforts, that "All People" are safe, healthy, self-sufficient, have economic, cultural, and recreation opportunities, and trust their government. The survey of 1,053 residents was conducted from September 2019 to December 2019.

### 2019 WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The Burruss Institute partnered with Wright State University to assist in the data collection for a comprehensive needs assessment for Madison County, Ohio. The results of the survey will be used to develop and implement an action plan pertaining to child abuse and neglect prevention strategies and activities that will serve families within the region. The Burruss Institute conducted 365 surveys during the fall of 2019.

## Community Surveys

The size and complexity of large communities makes them a challenge to accurately represent in surveys. However, the Institute utilizes multiple methods to reach groups of people that are historically hard to reach. Employing multiple methods of data collection allows the Institute to capture responses that otherwise may have gone unheard. This ensures that diverse populations are well represented, and resulting analyses are accurate representations of the opinions of community members.

### TALLATOONA COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In an effort to better understand and provide assistance to the needs of low-income residents of their eight county service area, Tallatoona Community Action Partnership (TCAP) contracted with the Burruss Institute to conduct a needs assessment. The Institute surveyed TCAP's community partners and clients in addition to collecting and analyzing data from secondary sources, such as the Census. The assessment highlighted areas of need based on data regarding poverty, education levels, employment, etc. The results of the surveys and secondary data were used to help Tallatoona Community Action Partnership update their services assisting low-income individuals and families in Bartow, Cobb, Douglas, Floyd, Gordon, Haralson, Paulding, and Polk County.

# Online Surveys

The Burruss Institute uses Qualtrics, one of the most highly respected and secure applications available, to author and host its online surveys. Qualtrics allows for complex and variable-dependent branching and/or filtering within questions. Questions may be filtered based upon answers directly provided by respondents, data imported from a database prior to survey administration and uniquely linked to each respondent, or from information based upon responses to a combination of questions. Surveys are programmed to assure that only those responses which are appropriate for each specific question are accepted; for instance, it will not accept multiple responses to single-response questions. For questions that are vital to the analysis of data or, in the case where a response determines follow-up questions, the question can be programmed to be mandatory. When a question programmed as mandatory is skipped by the respondent (respondent elects not to answer that question), they receive a prompt instructing them that a response is required, thus reducing item nonresponse. For lengthy surveys, a "Save" function can be added to a survey, allowing respondents to save his or her responses and return at a later time to complete and submit their survey. Qualtrics enables users to take a survey using computers, tablets, or cell phones.



## KSU POLS 1101 CLASS OMNIBUS STUDENT SURVEY

The Burruss Institute is working with the School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA) at KSU to field a survey covering various political and social topics. The survey is distributed to all students taking POLS 1101 during the current semester. The coordinators of the study are political science faculty members, Ben Taylor and April Johnson. The survey is conducted each semester and SGIA faculty members are given the opportunity to add questions to the survey and receive the data collected from their questions along with standard demographics. Data was most recently collected from 821 students during the Spring 2020 semester. The intent of this omnibus survey is to allow each participating faculty member to generate data enabling them to publish in various academic journals. The Institute has conducted the POLS 1101 survey each semester since the spring of 2019.

## STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND OPINION OF UNIVERSITY FEES SURVEY

During the spring of 2020, the Institute surveyed students from eight different University System of Georgia Institutions. The sample of eight universities was selected to be representative of the entire student body of all USG institutions. The survey asked students questions pertaining to student fees paid as part of their tuition each semester. The survey was designed to ascertain whether students were aware of how the fees were spent and the amount students were charged each semester. Responses were collected from 2,124 students across the eight institutions.

## HUMANITARIAN AID AND DEVELOPMENT IN YEMEN, A SURVEY OF NGOS OPERATING IN THE AREA

During 2020, Dr. Charity Butcher from the Political Science and International Affairs department, and affiliated with the School for Conflict Management, Peacebuilding, and Development, utilized the services of the Institute to conduct an online survey. The survey was administered to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Yemen. It was designed to gather information about collaboration between various NGOs and international partners on their humanitarian and development work in the country. With the aid of Dr. Butcher's graduate research assistant, the survey was translated into Arabic to expand the survey to a wider pool of respondents. The online survey collected responses from 86 professionals.

# Mail Surveys

## LOCAL PARKS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY SURVEY

Dr. Sara Evans, a professor of Criminal Justice at KSU, utilized the Institute's expertise to conduct a paper survey of residents of Marietta neighborhoods. Surveys were delivered via USPS. The neighborhoods were selected based on their distance to local parks. Participants were asked questions related to their frequency of park use, activities they participate in within their local park, and their perception of the park's benefit to the community. One thousand survey invitations were distributed. One hundred completed surveys were returned. The paper surveys were created using Teleform software. Teleform has the capability of scanning 60 single page surveys per minute. The software eliminates the need for manual data entry, thereby practically eliminating data entry error. The returned paper surveys were scanned and reviewed to ensure responses were recorded accurately. This was a pilot study, the results of which were used to support grant requests to expand the project to a larger number of cities.



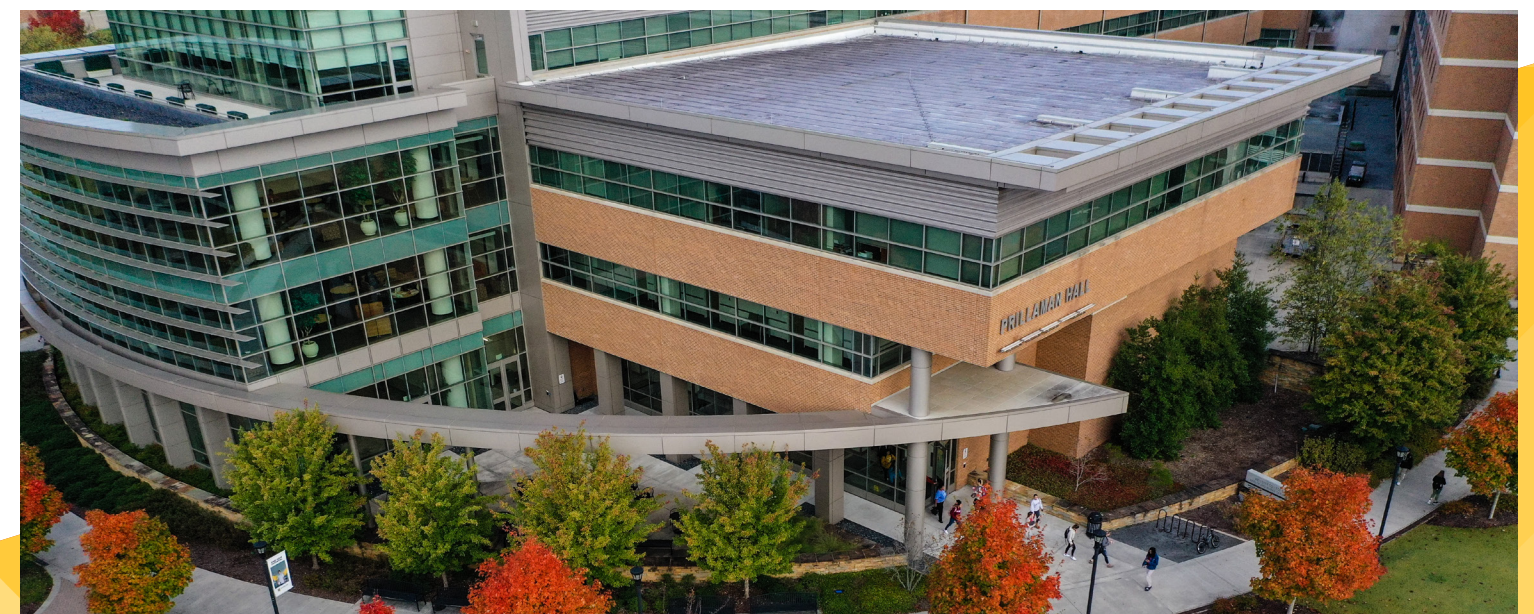
# Education Program Evaluation Projects



The Burruss Institute provided formative and summative evaluations for the 2019-2020 school year for several academic programs in Georgia. These programs have a variety of different purposes and goals, but typically include measurable outcomes related to student achievement, youth development, and family engagement. The Institute used data from site visits and school records, as well as youth, parent, teacher, and afterschool staff surveys. Feedback provided to program staff included recommendations for best practices and professional development. The table below includes the education programs the Institute evaluated, the purpose of the program, and the goals associated with each program.

Program Title	Purpose	Goals
<b>CORE Kid City 21st CCLC Evaluation – Newly Awarded</b>	Serves students and their families in grades K-5 from six elementary schools.  The program is held at the faith-based City of Refuge organization in Dalton, Georgia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve student achievement</li> <li>Foster youth development</li> <li>Improve family engagement</li> </ul>
<b>After School Academic Program (ASAP) III 21st CCLC Evaluation – Newly Awarded</b>	Serves students in grades K-5 and 9-12 at two elementary schools and one high school in Covington/Oxford Georgia (Newton County School System)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve student performance in the areas of math, reading/English/language arts, and science</li> <li>Foster youth development</li> <li>Provide students with opportunities to participate in a variety of enrichment activities</li> <li>Provide support to participating families</li> </ul>
<b>Marietta 21st CCLC at Youth Empowerment through Learning, Leading, and Service, Inc. (YELLS) Evaluation – Awarded 2017</b>	Serves elementary school students in grades K-5 and high school students in grades 9-12 in the Franklin Gateway community of Marietta, Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help youth achieve academic success</li> <li>Promote youth development (i.e., improve self-efficacy and soft skills)</li> <li>Promote family engagement</li> </ul>

Program Title	Purpose	Goals
<b>Next Level Community Camp Zion Development Center 21st CCLC Evaluation – Newly Awarded</b>	Serves students in grades K-5 from six elementary schools and is held at the Mount Zion First Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve student academic performance in the areas of math, reading/English/ language arts, and science</li> <li>Improve achievement levels in enrichment activities</li> <li>Foster family involvement</li> </ul>
<b>Cobb County School District Reach for the Stars 21st CCLC Evaluation – Awarded 2016</b>  <b>Leadership Academy and Innovation Academy – Newly Awarded in 2019</b>	Serves elementary school students in grades 2-5 from elementary schools in Acworth and Kennesaw, Georgia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve academic performance in the areas of math, reading/ language arts, science, and social studies</li> <li>Improve classroom behavior and enhance family involvement</li> </ul>
<b>Columbus State University Empowered Youth of Columbus 21st CCLC Evaluation – Awarded 2016</b>  <b>One additional newly awarded grant in 2019</b>	Serves elementary, middle, and high school students via five elementary schools, one high school, and two Boys & Girls Clubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expose students to the arts</li> <li>Provide college and career exploration activities to help raise standardized test scores and increase graduation and attendance rates</li> <li>Improve academic achievement for students participating in the program</li> <li>Reduce indicators for future criminal activity</li> <li>Involve adult family members by having them participate in education activities which encourage planning for their child's future</li> </ul>
<b>Douglas County School District 21st CCLC Evaluation- CHAMPS – Awarded 2017</b> <b>SOAR – Awarded 2017</b> <b>SMART – Newly Awarded in 2019</b> <b>Factory Transition – Newly Awarded in 2019</b>	Serves elementary, middle, and high school students via six elementary schools, two middle schools, and three high schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve academic achievement</li> <li>Foster youth development</li> <li>Improve family engagement</li> </ul>



# Program Evaluation Projects

In addition to school systems and education focused nonprofits, the Institute provides program evaluation services to a variety of organizations. These organizations provide prevention education and services to meet various needs including drug and alcohol use and abuse, human trafficking, and communicable diseases. In each respect, the projects offer their own unique challenges. The following project descriptions outline the work the Institute conducted to ensure the success of each evaluation.

## DRUGS DON'T WORK PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Drugs Don't Work (DDW) program in Georgia is a statewide effort to reduce drug and alcohol use in the workplace. It is a program of The Council on Alcohol and Drugs, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. DDW provides educational and training services to employers throughout Georgia. In turn, employers are able to become certified drug free workplaces, thus contributing to the reduction of drug and alcohol use. The Burruss Institute evaluated the Drugs Don't Work program throughout 2019 by collecting and analyzing data from multiple observations of program presentations, an online survey of chamber of commerce members, and a telephone survey of participating businesses. The Institute has provided evaluation services to the Drugs Don't Work program since 2011.



## THE COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS: EVALUATION OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

The Council for Alcohol and Drugs (TCAD) contracted with the Burruss Institute to conduct an evaluation of their Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention Program (ASAPP) activities in four Georgia counties: Cherokee, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gordon. The goals of the ASAPP programs include reducing the early onset of alcohol use and access to alcohol among 9-20-year-olds. Burruss has been providing evaluation services for the Council's prevention programming since 2006.

## STREET SMART YOUTH PROJECT PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Institute has worked with Street Smart Youth Project (SSYP) since 2016 to evaluate several programs provided by the nonprofit organization. SSYP works with minority youth in order to involve, prepare and empower them for growth and healthy living as adults, with an emphasis on prevention regarding delinquency, substance use, and HIV. The data collected during evaluation periods is used to provide SSYP with results of the outcomes of their programs.

## WELLSPRING LIVING PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Burruss Institute worked with Wellspring Living, a nonprofit organization that delivers services and provides restoration programs for survivors of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, to update their evaluation plan and assess the impact of their residential and community programs, including the development of logic models for each program. Burruss employs a utilization-focused approach to ensure the evaluation process and findings are useful to program staff and funders. In addition, the Burruss Institute provided a fiscal year annual report in August of 2019 and a calendar year report in May 2020 to assess progress on program goals and objectives.

## ATLANTA HARM REDUCTION COALITION (AHRC) PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Institute assisted the Atlanta Harm Reduction Coalition (AHRC) in the evaluation of two grants in 2019. AHRC works with individuals who engage in high-risk behaviors by providing access to wellness and health services. The Healthcare Georgia Foundation grant evaluation measured whether a program for African-American women in the Atlanta area increased HIV awareness, increased the number of HIV positive African-American women identified and linked to care, and increased access to HIV prevention knowledge and skills for high risk African-American women. The second grant program, ViiV Positive Action Community Grants, provides organizations with the means to reach people not currently benefitting from existing HIV support services or programs. The Institute conducted an evaluation of AHRC's Mobile Health Unit, community events, and drop-in service center.



# Campus Engagement

## How We Help

The Burruss Institute houses a skilled group of researchers with experience and knowledge that are assets to the campus community. The staff at the Institute often collaborate with faculty members, departments, and colleges at KSU to provide services and expertise to enhance research projects and grant proposals. Examples include survey questionnaire or methodology assistance, programing and conducting online surveys, IRB compliance review prior to submission, dashboards, GIS analysis, data analysis, and grant or proposal development. Providing these resources enables the Institute to aid the KSU community in its efforts to become a premier R2 institution.

The Institute also provides opportunities to students who attend KSU. Through internships and paid student assistant positions, the Institute gives students the ability to work hands on with staff members while participating in data collection, data analysis, and reporting results. These opportunities enhance students' education by reinforcing the skills they have developed in the classroom by working with real world data on sponsored research projects.

### Colleges and Departments

The Institute is part of the Office of Research and able to provide support to faculty, departments, and colleges across the campus. To the right are some of the departments we worked with in 2020.

- Office of the President
- School of Government and International Affairs
- Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice
- Bagwell College of Education



**Dr. Jennifer McMahon-Howard**  
Professor of Criminal Justice and Sociology

*"With managing multiple external grants and contracts, I'm often in need of some additional research support and I can always rely on the Burruss Institute to provide it. Whether it is designing and administrating online surveys, analyzing data, or writing final reports, I know that the Burruss Institute will be able to help me produce high quality research/evaluation tools and outcomes."*

Number of faculty members assisted

22

Online surveys conducted as part of faculty research

8

Research grants supported

7

Survey design and development

10



## Student Opportunities

### Student Interviewers

43

The Institute provides students with the opportunity to work on authentic research projects. Students are trained in research methods and develop skills that enable them to interview participants and accurately record responses.

### Student Research Hours

2,730

Students engaged in research at the Institute completed over 2,700 hours working on a variety of different projects. Students experience the rigor of data collection and some go on to analyze and report findings.

### Student Internships

3

Internships provide students the opportunity to work on client sponsored research projects while under the supervision of staff. Interns can complete up to 20 hours a week and earn class credit during a semester.

### Sponsored Projects

5

Five different externally funded projects provided opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills they obtain in the classroom on real world research activities as part of their educational experience at KSU.





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*Contact the Burruss  
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we can help implement  
your research needs.*

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