



Miller Center

for Social Entrepreneurship

Name of social enterprise: StreetWell

Mission statement: StreetWell provides transitional employment and housing opportunities for marginalized populations, then converts these transitional programs into long-term health and wealth building programs

Webpage: <https://www.streetwell.info/>

GSBI 2020 business plan presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olnFeL69vRc&t=6s>

Headquarters: Baltimore, Maryland

Location(s) of research: Baltimore, Maryland.

The Fellowship will run in 2021, but due to the ongoing ambiguity caused by the Covid pandemic, most international action research projects are designed to be conducted remotely (e.g., via Zoom) without the immersive component of travel to the field. However, with the deployment of Covid vaccines, domestic US placements are probable, although their configuration and timing is contingent upon local conditions and university travel policy. The video component of this project is contingent upon field work. We will decide the 2021 placements and in-person versus remote engagement on March 1, 2021, and issue award letters to students on that date.

Background: StreetWell is democratizing housing access and overcoming the wealth divide using innovative business and financing models. It is launching an Impact Real Estate Portfolio (IREP) in Baltimore and Hagerstown, Maryland. The IREP is like a traditional real estate holding company, but different in that it acquires distressed real estate assets, renovates business (creating jobs) and leases properties – exclusively in redlined, rusted out American neighborhoods. Unlike a traditional company, the IREP distributes shares to local workers and tenants. StreetWell seeks to scale up its IREP model by using decentralized financial (defi) technologies (such as blockchain) to make its impact more broadly available.

The challenge: StreetWell has requested an action research project that will support its scaling plans, including investigating technologies, elaborating financial models, identifying scaling obstacles and creating a scalable impact model.

Action research products needed:

1. A consultancy-style report on key components of scaling IREP. This would include a summary of the current state of blockchain/crypto/defi business applications tech/industry/academia, and advice on mobile technology use. This would support the clarification of StreetWell's defi usage thesis.

Student skills needed: Financial analysis, fintech mobile app use, business model innovation, social impact model analysis.

Keywords: Housing access, innovative housing strategies, decentralized finance, blockchain, democratization of asset creation through housing, participatory community development.

