I) **Summary of activity**

- **Thesis of project or need addressed:**
  The aim of *Bridges for Kansas Families* is to give “ear” to lived experiences and enhance the many voices of adult family members and their adolescents living in chronic poverty. Using a community-based participatory research approach, this project will engage family members and community partners - who often go unseen and unheard - to address the social issue of family poverty and its impacts. Awareness, educational and scholarly products will result from the project.

- **Location of project:**
  4 communities in Kansas; state conferences in Topeka, Rock Springs 4-H Center; national conferences in Minneapolis, MN and Billings, MT

- **Length of project:**
  2yrs, 10mos

- **Types of action(s) of the project:**
  Project interviews have taken place in Manhattan, Wichita, McPherson and Ottawa. Results disseminated at:
  - TWO PRESENTATIONS AT THE KS POVERTY CONFERENCE:
    - Engaging K-State Extension to Support Local Poverty Alleviation Programs (July 2017, *Topeka*; Johannes, Cless, McFarland)
    - Establishing a Poverty Reduction Network for Kansas: Stronger Ground (July 2018, *Topeka*; Johannes, Curtis, Rose)
  - ONE RESEARCH PRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS CONFERENCE:
    - Addressing Family Poverty Through Integrative Community-Based Participatory Research (Nov. 2017, *Minneapolis*, MN; Cless, Johannes, Olsen)
  - PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE:
    - Presentation on resilience and hardiness findings at Stronger Ground state retreat (Feb. 2018, *Rock Springs 4-H Center, Junction City, KS*; Cless, Johannes)
  - ONE APPLIED RESEARCH/TRANSLATION PRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL EXTENSION VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE
    - *I See You: Training for volunteers who choose to work in poverty alleviation*; curriculum presentation (May 2019, *Billings*, MT; Johannes)

- **Outreach**
  - TWO PRESENTATIONS AT THE KS POVERTY CONFERENCE:
    - Engaging K-State Extension to Support Local Poverty Alleviation Programs (July 2017, *Topeka*; Johannes, Cless, McFarland)
    - Establishing a Poverty Reduction Network for Kansas: Stronger Ground (July 2018, *Topeka*; Johannes, Curtis, Rose)
  - PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE:
    - Presentation on resilience and hardiness findings at Stronger Ground state retreat (Feb. 2018, *Rock Springs 4-H Center, Junction City, KS*; Cless, Johannes)
• Teaching (service learning):
  No on-campus teaching, but community-based, non-formal training provided

• Scholarly research:
  o MASTERS THESIS - Cless, A. (2017). *Bridges for Kansas Families: The Role of Hardiness and Social Capital in Alleviating Poverty*
  o ONE RESEARCH PRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS CONFERENCE
    - Addressing Family Poverty Through Integrative Community-Based Participatory Research (2017, Minneapolis, MN; Cless, Johannes, Olsen)

• Training:
  o TWO PRESENTATIONS AT THE KS POVERTY CONFERENCE:
    - Engaging K-State Extension to Support Local Poverty Alleviation Programs (July 2017, Topeka; Johannes, Cless, McFarland)
    - Establishing a Poverty Reduction Network for Kansas: Stronger Ground (July 2018, Topeka; Johannes, Curtis, Rose)
  o ONE APPLIED RESEARCH/TRANSLATION PRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL EXTENSION VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE
    - *I See You: Training for volunteers who choose to work in poverty alleviation*; curriculum presentation. (May 2019, Billings, MT; Johannes)

II) Project partners:
• University and Extension partners who provided support for interviews, student support and product development:
  o Greg Paul, Assoc Professor and Interim Dept. Head; Communication Studies
  o Stephanie Bannister, Asst VP/ Education and Personal Develop
  o Adam Cless, Evaluation Program Assistant Office of Educational Innovation and Evaluation College of Education
  o Charlotte Olsen, Extension Specialist, Family Systems

• Community Partners who organized interview opportunities:
  o Manhattan contact - Jayme Morris Hardeman, Exec. Director, Thrive!
  o Wichita contact – Janis Cox
  o McPherson contact – Rebecca Lewis
  o Ottawa contact – Rebecca McFarland

• Community Stakeholders who supported state-wide dissemination through conferences and/or trainings:
  o Rebecca McFarland, Ottawa
  o Jennifer Rose, Newton
  o LeaAnn Curtis, Topeka

III) Impacts of the work:
• Conference presentations: three presentations (listed above)
• Training materials: *I See You: Equipping volunteers to build resilience with people living in poverty*. This curriculum has been piloted with 6 Thrive! groups and is being adapted for
other Kansas communities through the Stronger Ground poverty network and through members of Extension's national volunteer network.

- **Community or organizational changes**: Support to establish a state-wide poverty alleviation network known as Stronger Ground

**IV) Capacity built to continue work:**

- **Grant funding**: Internal, competitive funds secured to continue Stronger Ground network; Extension funds will support dissemination of I See You curriculum and training.
- **Funding community partners secured**: Community partners are benefiting from the internal funds that support the on-going meeting and training of Stronger Ground partners

**V) Self-assessment of your project:**

- **Successes**: completion of the parent, youth interviews; built capacity for engaged research among of community contacts; utilized findings in Stronger Ground organizational and informational meetings; completion of thesis; pilot of curriculum based on findings from project.
- **Challenges**: changes in staff and stakeholders in partner communities made completion of the interviews challenging; generalizability of interview findings was limited by lack of diversity among the participants; local programs were experiencing staff and funding changes which challenged continuity and timely completion of elements of the project.

**VI) Final budget:**

- Will be forth coming from College of Human Ecology; remaining funds may be returned to CECD.