

# Rodney W. Thomas

## EDUCATION

**M.A. in Sociology**, Applied Social Research Program, West Virginia University Department of Sociology and Anthropology (1991) – Focus in research design, program evaluation, survey creation, quantitative and qualitative research methodology, data analysis, statistics, database management, and report writing.

**B.S. in Gerontology**, Bowling Green State University (1989) – Focus in sociology.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Senior Research Associate, Begun Center for Violence Prevention and Education at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University** (July 1, 2011-present) Responsible for coordination of multiple state and federally-funded program evaluations related to subject areas such as police use of force, offender reentry, youth development, youth employment, youth violence, and out-of-school time programs. Involved with evaluation design, project management, data gathering and data analysis. Provide technical assistance to community agencies related to evaluation and research issues. Create surveys, focus group protocols, gather and analyze data, write reports.

**Evaluation Coordinator, United Black Fund of Cleveland – Cleveland Coders Grant** (2015-present). Providing evaluation services to a coalition consisting of representatives from Richmond Heights Local Schools, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland, the Cleveland Public Library and the Great Lakes Science Center. Cleveland Coders is a multi-faceted mentoring program conducted in the Richmond Heights School District that introduces Richmond heights students to 21<sup>st</sup> century computational and career readiness skills. The ongoing evaluation focusses on analysis and reporting of Youth Outcomes Survey data as well as CMSD student academic performance data.

**Evaluation Coordinator, United Way Holmes and Wayne Counties – FINRA Grant** (2014-2016). This evaluation focused on the financial education outcomes for a subset of obligors in Wayne and Holmes County. Analyses included child support obligation and payment data and client-level assessments of skills and knowledge gained in multiple Healthy Finances Program classes.

**Evaluation Coordinator, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services Asset Building Project** (2011-2014). The completed evaluation work include activities designed to assist the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Child Support (OCS) in assessing the implementation and efficacy of the Asset Building Project (ABP). The Evaluator worked closely with OCS staff and project partners to design and execute a multi-method evaluation that was closely tied to ABP goals and objectives. The Evaluator scope of service included developing ABP evaluation tools, monitoring referral activity between CSEAS and AFI grantees, conducting ongoing participant interviews, merging and analyzing CSEA data, measuring and reporting on changes in client financial stability levels, and providing ongoing feedback to inform data-driven decision-making and best practices by OCS project staff, CSEAs, and AFI grantees.

**Evaluation Coordinator, Franklin County CSEA Pathfinder Prisoner Reentry Initiative** (2011-2013). The overarching goal of Pathfinder was to remove barriers that parents who were leaving incarceration face related to child support and employment, while also providing referrals to community-based and faith-based organizations. The Evaluator scope of

service included managing and analyzing secondary datasets related to child support information as well as pre/post surveys of client attitudes and knowledge.

**Evaluation Coordinator, Cuyahoga County Child Support Enforcement Agency Section 1115 Demonstration Grant (2009-2011).** Evaluation activities focused on the completion of key informant interviews with agency staff, analysis of CSEA administrative data, project meetings, and review of program documentation. CSEA administrative data was obtained, cleaned, and merged for all clients in the intervention and delayed intervention groups. Semi-structured agency interviews were conducted with program directors and case managers during the project period.

**Senior Research Associate, Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Kent State University.** (March 2007-June 30, 2011) Responsible for coordination of multiple federally-funded program evaluations related to subject areas such as substance abuse treatment, community re-entry of Hispanic offenders, and youth gangs. Involved with data gathering, management, analysis, and reporting of performance measures utilizing the Global Assessment of Individual Need (GAIN). Provide technical assistance to community agencies related to evaluation and research issues.

**Senior Research and Grants Coordinator, National Health Promotion Associates, Inc.** (March 2006-March 2007, February 2004-March 2005) Responsible for the management and execution of multiple health- and prevention-related federally-funded program evaluations. Developed evaluation designs, created data collection procedures, collected data from multiple sources, synthesized and managed data, analyzed data, created presentations, wrote reports, created survey and assessment tools and supervised junior research and grants staff. Also responsible for the writing and development of federal and state grant proposals. Conducted prospect research for federal and state grant monies, conceptualized programs, developed partnerships, wrote grant proposals, managed grants, met grant reporting deadlines. Examples of success include a grant from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention to develop a health promotion program for adolescent employees, and a contract with the New York City Public Schools to provide health promotion training and evaluation services.

**Senior Research Associate, Westchester County Department of Health, Division of Planning & Evaluation.** (March 2005-March 2006) Worked to improve reporting, evaluation, and data gathering activities for grant-funded health programs, including the Healthy Neighborhoods Program and the Facilitated Insurance Enrollment program. Provided technical assistance, assessed data needs, aligned data gathering methods with grant reporting requirements and constructed data gathering tools. Responsible for collecting and analyzing health and medical data from multiple sources and developing reports and statistical information that was used for planning by management, finance, community health services, administrative and medical personnel. Also responsible for working with grants department, health officials, and community-level program staff to write and submit grant proposals, and conduct evaluation activities. Examples of project topics included HIV prevention, SIDS education, asthma, and immigrant smoking cessation.

**Freelance Research and Evaluation Consultant** (January 2003-present) Provide research, evaluation, and grant writing consultancy services to clients including the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, Cuyahoga County Office of Child Support Services, Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency, The Consultation Center at Yale University, Danbury Hospital Department of Pediatrics, Western Connecticut State University Department of Nursing, National Health Promotion Associates. Examples of activities include facilitating focus groups, observing programs, administering surveys, analyzing data, and writing grant applications.

**Director of Research and Evaluation, Food Bank for New York City** (March 2002-December 2002) Responsible for all research, evaluation, and grant activities including study conceptualization, design, instrument creation, survey distribution, data analysis, report

generation and presentation of results to the media, funders, agencies and Food Bank staff. Research projects worked on included a study of demand for emergency food assistance after September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Research Associate, Metis Associates, Inc.** (September 1999-March 2002) Responsible for multiple school-based program evaluations in the Cleveland Municipal School District related to Sylvan Learning Centers, LightSpan, college readiness, universal feeding, and summer school. Also responsible for the evaluation of federal and state Department of Education grant-funded school programs related to teacher professional development, bilingual education, comprehensive school reform, and special education. Wrote grant proposal sections, designed evaluations, created evaluation tools, conducted classroom observations, conducted focus groups with parents, students, teachers and principals, administered survey instruments, gathered and analyzed data. Wrote numerous evaluation reports for the federal Department of Education, New York State Department of Education, New York City Public Schools, and the Cleveland Municipal School District. Presented evaluation results and made recommendations for program improvement. Supervised research assistants and research analysts in the completion of evaluation tasks.

**Research Associate, Urban Child Research Center, Cleveland State University** (February 1992-September 1999) Conducted research and evaluation tasks on a number of grant-funded projects at a multidisciplinary research center that studies issues related to the growth and development of children in urban settings. Examples of research projects included a youth violence program in public housing estates, a project with local hospitals and doctors to increase awareness of youth firearm issues, resiliency in children of drug-addicted mothers, immunization rates of the poorest and least educated neighborhoods in eight Ohio cities, and an assessment of healthcare needs in a Cleveland suburb. Coordinated grant application submissions, wrote grant proposal sections, created data collection procedures, managed large datasets using SPSS and other software packages, analyzed data, wrote reports, created evaluation tools, supervised field interviewers and research assistants, conducted fieldwork.

**Research Assistant, Regional Research Institute, West Virginia University** (August 1990-August 1991) Conducted an historical analysis of United Mine Workers of American pension fund archives and an analysis of local labor markets in Central Appalachia.

**Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, West Virginia University** (August 1989-August 1991) Worked with faculty on a number of federally funded research grants related to juvenile justice, youth violence, and youth gangs. Wrote grant proposal sections, analyzed data, conducted field interviews, and wrote research reports.