

RESEARCH REPORT

# A Preliminary Study of Service Use across Colocated Providers

**Lessons on Participant Service Utilization across Multiple Partners at THEARC  
in the District of Columbia**

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# Executive Summary

This report documents early lessons and recommendations from ongoing research on participant use of services across multiple organizations housed at the Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC) in the District of Columbia's Ward 8. THEARC has 14 resident partner organizations and is coordinated by Building Bridges Across the River (BBAR). THEARC provides a multitude of services; in 2017, more than 100,000 people visited THEARC, and its resident partners provided \$30 million in programs and services to the community (BBAR 2017). The neighborhoods surrounding THEARC experience high poverty and crime rates. The on-campus programs provided by BBAR and its partners are primarily directed at children and youth, covering a wide range of services, including education, recreation, arts, health care, workforce development, and environmental inquiry.

The overall study is formative—that is, it is designed to learn lessons for continuous improvement among colocated partners offering services for children and families, not to produce conclusive findings on outcomes. The study explores three primary research questions: (1) What is the pattern of participant service use across THEARC's resident partner organizations, especially those that appear to enroll high numbers of cross-utilizers? (2) For participants who cross-utilize services, what are the *potential* impacts on key educational, economic, or well-being outcomes? (3) How might participant cross-utilization of services and measurement of shared client outcomes across THEARC's partner organizations be encouraged and facilitated? To provide preliminary answers to these questions, the Urban Institute team collected and analyzed administrative data, interview data, data from a brief survey, and key documents from BBAR and the partner organizations, as well as interview data from participants and input from partners during formative evaluation feedback sessions. Although our analysis was limited by incomplete and inconsistent administrative data, which is fairly typical in early-phase formative research, the study has produced some preliminary insights and recommendations that may be useful to THEARC partners or any set of partners seeking to develop a strong colocation.

Using the administrative data available to us, we identified that about one-quarter of THEARC participants used the services of more than one on-campus organization during 2018. However, qualitative data suggest that the share of cross-utilizers may be higher now because of increased attention to collaboration by on-campus partners since late 2018. The main drivers of cross-utilization appear to be self-referral by parents, recommendations and semiformal navigation assistance from BBAR's reception desk staff, formal agreements among partners to cross-serve participants, the sharing of facilities across spaces (e.g., a gym, two theaters, and large meeting rooms), and informal staff referrals.

Cross-utilizers were most likely to use the programming and services provided directly by BBAR, which is well positioned to develop relationships with most participants as the coordinating organization for THEARC. The Children’s Health Center, the Washington School for Girls, and The Washington Ballet also had high rates of cross-utilization: 60 to 75 percent of their participants interacted with at least one other organization. The Washington School for Girls stood out as a hub for cross-utilization. Even excluding use of BBAR programs from the analysis, 69 percent of Washington School for Girls students use at least one other organization on the campus. These high rates might be because the school intentionally outsources its after-school care, school health clinic functions, and many enrichment activities to other on-site partners.

Interviews with parents and students from the Washington School for Girls reveal a few common perceived benefits of the services received via cross-utilization. The parents and children we interviewed pointed to the school as the primary anchor of their activity at THEARC, as it provides a tight-knit, caring, and supportive community for the whole family. They also spoke to how the colocation relationship among the school and other partner organizations allowed for safe and coordinated care and learning for students throughout the day, as well as access to a wide array of enriching activities and services for both students and parents outside school and workday hours. Some families interviewed discussed how the whole family got involved in the programs at THEARC, with siblings attending the Boys & Girls Club and parents partaking in performances, volunteer activities, and arts programs apart from and with their children. Available administrative data suggest high cross-utilization among siblings: 22 percent of households with children in the sample had two or more siblings involved in services at THEARC.

Although the data from this phase of the study are too preliminary to draw fixed conclusions, the intentional colocation of partners at THEARC may be producing potentially notable effects on the health and well-being of adults and children who cross-utilize them. This question merits further study.

All partners involved in this study—BBAR staff, THEARC partners, interviewed participants, and the Urban team—were asked to consider how to further bolster cross-utilization and its potential benefits to participants at THEARC. Recommendations include partner agencies bolstering their data practices, particularly organizations that would like to learn more about their collective impact; resident partners at THEARC formalizing their partnerships through such vehicles as written memoranda of understanding to identify and promote service utilization across their participant base; and all organizations at THEARC creating a common mission statement aimed at aligning services across the campus around common outcomes, such as increased whole-family well-being and resilience.

# A Preliminary Study of Service Use across Colocated Providers

The Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC) is a \$60 million, 203,000-square-foot community center managed by Building Bridges Across the River (BBAR) and located in Ward 8 of the District of Columbia. In the neighborhoods surrounding THEARC, about 43 percent of families with children have incomes below the federal poverty line, which is over twice the rate of poverty for all families in the District.<sup>1</sup> BBAR's mission is to improve the quality of life for families living east of the Anacostia River. BBAR carries out this mission by serving as the landlord, property manager, and facility coordinator for the Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC), as well as by operating several other programs, both on the campus and off site, that are designed to address social, health, environmental, and economic disparities in Washington, DC, particularly in Ward 8. The actual THEARC campus is provided to BBAR under a land charter from the National Park Service, which has given jurisdiction to the city and requires that education, arts, and recreation be the core programming offered on site.

THEARC currently hosts 14 organizations as resident partners and works with 3 nonresident partners. BBAR sponsors 6 additional programs directly, 4 of which are located on the campus. Together, these organizations offer a wide range of educational, health, cultural, recreation, and social service programs to DC-area residents who live east of the Anacostia River, more than 90 percent of whom are black.<sup>2</sup> The shared aim of these organizations is to improve the quality of life of their participants, many of whom are affected by the significant social and economic disparities generated by a troubled history of racial segregation and disinvestment in DC's easternmost wards. The campus is made up of three buildings, a farm, and a playground that sits on 16.5 acres of land on the District's southeastern border with Maryland. Box 1 describes the populations served and services offered by each resident and nonresident partner of the THEARC, as well as the 6 BBAR programs.

The purpose of this study is to answer three research questions:

- What is the pattern of participant service use across resident partner organizations of THEARC, especially those who appear to enroll high numbers of cross-utilizers?
- For participants who cross-utilize services, what are the potential impacts on key educational, economic, or well-being outcomes?
- How might participant cross-utilization of services and measurement of shared client outcomes across partner organizations of THEARC be encouraged and facilitated?

The answers to these questions are important to BBAR leaders and their partners because they recognize that multiple social and economic factors may impinge upon the physical and mental health of people who live in nearby neighborhoods, and they wish to understand their combined impact on these issues, including how to enhance the effectiveness of their colocation for improving the well-being of the children and families who access services and programming at THEARC.

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## BOX 1

### THEARC Partners

#### *Resident Partners*

**AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School:** An early learning, public charter school offering preschool to 3- and 4-year-olds.

**ArtReach GW/The George Washington University's Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service:** A program run by the George Washington University's Corcoran School of the Arts & Design, whose mission is to provide community services to Wards 7 and 8 through the visual arts.

**Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys:** A tuition-free Episcopalian school from prekindergarten through 6th grade for students from traditionally underserved communities.

**Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington:** A youth service organization that helps build confidence and character necessary for adulthood.

**Children's Health Center at THEARC:** A health center that offers primary care, urgent care, mental health services, and social support for children in Washington, DC.

**Covenant House Washington:** A social services program that provides food, shelter, clothing, educational and vocational services, counseling, child care, and more for homeless and at-risk youth ages 15-24.

**DC Central Kitchen:** A newly opened food security initiative that fights hunger through five ventures: Culinary Job Training, Community Meals, Healthy School Food, Healthy Corners, and the Campus Kitchens Project.

**Levine Music:** An after-school program that provides a musical home in classical, jazz, rock, early childhood music and musical theater for anyone interested in studying, performing, or listening to music regardless of age, ability, or financial means. Music therapy is also available for people with special needs.

**The Meditation Center @ THEARC/The David Lynch Foundation:** A resource that addresses the epidemic of stress and trauma in Wards 7 and 8 through transcendental meditation.

**Phillips@THEARC:** An art gallery that provides programming and strives to improve personal and community well-being through visual arts for Washington, DC, residents in Wards 7 and 8.

**Trinity at THEARC:** A branch of Trinity Washington University that offers an associate of arts degree in general studies for working adults in Wards 7 and 8.

**The Washington Ballet:** A dance studio that offers ballet classes for children ages 4–18 and adult modern dance, yoga, Zumba, ballet, Pilates, and barre classes.

**Washington School for Girls:** An independent, all-girls, Catholic day school serving grades 3–8 in Anacostia, tuition free.

**Building Bridges Across the River:** A nonprofit that provides best-in-class facilities, programs, and partnerships in arts and culture, economic opportunity, and health and well-being for residents east of the Anacostia River. Programs include the following:

**11th Street Bridge Park:** An initiative transforming the old 11th Street bridge into the city’s first elevated park and a new venue for healthy recreation, environmental education, and the arts. The bridge park is expected to be completed in 2023.

**BBAR Farms:** A collection of urban farms that includes THEARC Farm, an on-site, 1-acre farm that provides engagement, educational, and workforce training opportunities for residents of Wards 7 and 8 and six off-campus garden plots located throughout Wards 6 and 8. THEARC Farm hosts a farmers’ market during the summer, selling fresh produce to locals and THEARC users.

**Building Bridges to a Better Life:** A partnership with WC Smith to connect 91 homeless families formerly housed at the DC General Family Shelter to health, education, and employment services.

**iCAN @ THEARC:** A technical theater internship program offered to youths living east of the Anacostia River in collaboration with THEARC Theater.

**Skyland Workforce Center:** An off-campus BBAR collaborative that provides employment services for DC residents, including job training, resume assistance, job search support, case management, and small business development.

**THEARC Theater:** A community performance space that provides arts and culture for East of the River communities and is the largest theater space in Wards 7 and 8.

#### *Nonresident Partners*

**Double Nickels Theatre Company, Inc.:** A local theater offering creative space for community members and an effort to preserve the oral history of Washingtonians.

**Iona East Senior Services:**<sup>3</sup> A service center, slated to open in early 2020, that provides social, health, and therapeutic services to seniors who live east of the Anacostia River and have cognitive, physical, and intellectual challenges.

**Training Grounds:** A professional development program aiming to equip economically disadvantaged youth and young adults for living-wage careers.

**Sources:** “THEARC Resident Partners” and “Non-Resident Partners,” Building Bridges Across the River, accessed August 12, 2019, <https://bbardc.org/resident-partners/> and <https://bbardc.org/non-resident-partners/>.

## Methods, Data, and Findings

This study took place from August 2018 to July 2019 and was divided into four parts: (1) initial data collection and analysis of data from resident partners of THEARC who participated in the study; (2) collection and analysis of additional data from resident partners and participants to explore high-frequency cross-utilization and the potential impacts of cross-utilization on key social determinant of health outcomes; (3) review of findings with BBAR and its partners, including development of recommendations for the field based on early insights; and (4) dissemination of lessons learned.

Urban's research on cross-utilization at THEARC is formative. The purpose of this study is to develop insights on the pattern and potential impacts of cross-utilization at THEARC so BBAR and its resident partners can use those insights to develop their collaboration and determine the direction of future inquiries. In other words, the findings are not fixed conclusions but rather early insights upon which improvements in practice might be built. Data analyzed during this phase of the cross-utilization study include the following:

- participant rosters from resident partners and BBAR
- responses to a survey of resident partners on cross-utilization
- perspectives on cross-utilization from staff of a targeted sample of resident partners and BBAR
- perspectives on cross-utilization from a small sample of participants who use the services of three or more partners

The research team began by conducting a very brief survey of resident partners on cross-utilization. Of the 14 organizations active on the campus at the time, 7 organizations responded to the survey. Then BBAR gathered the participant rosters of THEARC's resident partners and its own participant data. The roster data covered participants who used services from January 2018 through September 2018. BBAR staff gathered the data in fall 2018, and the Urban team compiled and matched it to observe potential patterns of participant-sharing across organizations. For their participants, each organization was asked to provide first and last names, dates of birth or ages, addresses, and, if relevant, parent or guardian names. No sensitive data were collected, and the research team operated under BBAR's data-sharing agreement with its partners and strict confidentiality protocols as set by Urban's confidential data guidelines, which limited access to participant data to members of the Urban Institute research team and required the destruction of all participant data at the end of the study period. To contextualize the roster analysis, the research team

conducted seven semistructured interviews with staff of resident partner organizations, all of which were identified as having relatively high numbers of cross-utilizers among their participants. In addition, the research team conducted interviews with BBAR managers and reception desk staff, a small number of high cross-utilizing families, and the staff of THEARC's reception desks.

The roster data had some limitations. First, not all resident partners chose to participate in the study (11 of the 14 on-site partners agreed to participate). Second, the composition of tenant organizations (i.e., resident partners) at THEARC was in modest flux during the study. Of the 11 partners that were on campus in September 2018 and that chose to participate in the roster analysis, 3 were too new to the campus to contribute meaningful cross-utilization data for analysis. The 8 organizations included in the cross-utilization analysis were ArtReach GW, BBAR, the Boys & Girls Club, the Children's Health Center, Levine Music, Trinity at THEARC, The Washington Ballet, and the Washington School for Girls. Third, the completeness of the roster data varied widely across the 8 partners included in the roster analysis. Urban matched participants across organizations, using name and birth date or age, when available. It is likely that in some instances, participants could not be matched because their name or birth date was entered incorrectly. A total of 894 records lacked age or birth date and failed to match with a name across organizations. The mission-based standards each partner used to determine who is a participant also varied significantly; for example, some partners may define a participant as a long-term enrollee, such as a student, while others may define a participant as a partaker of a one-time activity or a short class. Other significant limitations are noted in box 2. Because the goal of this phase of the study was only to observe likely patterns of cross-utilization and make inferences about potential impacts, the Urban team accepted these limitations as inherent to early-stage formative research. As is the case with most formative research, we anticipate that the reliability of the data we collect from THEARC partners will improve over time, allowing for more conclusive findings in the future.

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## BOX 2

### Limitations of the Enrollment Data for This Analysis

The research team encountered several issues during the cross-organization data-matching process.

- Different organizations may have different standards for who ends up on their participant lists, such as attendance at a one-time event versus enrollment in a full-semester program. We do not yet have information on those differences.
- Although enrollment data from January 2018 through September 2018 were requested, different organizations may have different periods during which participation is documented—the current school semester versus the last school semester, for instance. We do not have complete information on these differences.
- To restrict BBAR’s list to participants in BBAR programs, BBAR eliminated from their list participants who checked in at BBAR on their way to other organizations in the building. Elimination was based on check-in time, and some participants may have been wrongly included or excluded.
- The Children’s Health Center provided a list of people who signed in to the medical center, not necessarily users of medical services, for important confidentiality reasons. Approximately three-quarters of the list of 2,241 people were adults who were not patients. Because only children are served at this facility, we are likely missing a substantial number who used the Children’s Health Center during this period but were signed in under the name of a parent or guardian and therefore were not matching participants at other organizations (other than BBAR, whose list also includes adult sign-ins).
- In some cases, names or birth dates may have been incorrectly entered and, consequently, failed to match across organizations. In other cases, users of short-term or one-time services may not have been registered at all. In those cases, this analysis will not recognize existing cross-utilization.

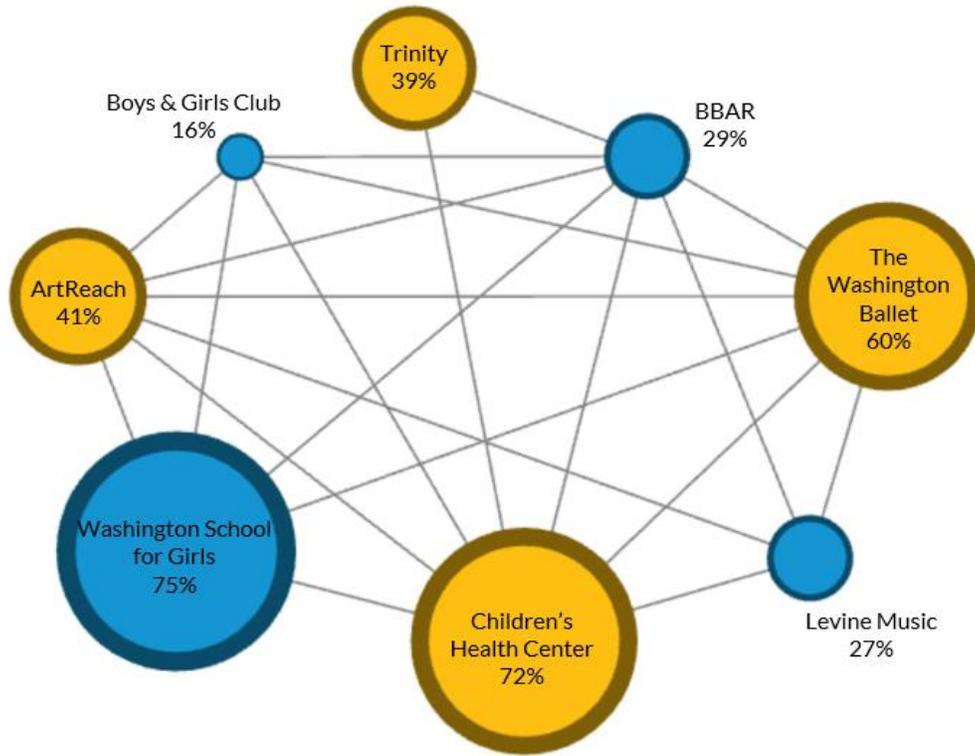
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## Cross-Utilization Patterns

From January 2018 to September 2018, 7,495 people were recorded on the participant rosters of the resident partners included in the study, 3,852 of whom were younger than 18 years old. Of those 7,495 people, 5,642 (75 percent) had used the services of one organization on THEARC campus, while 1,784 participants (24 percent) had used the services of two organizations. Sixty-nine participants (1 percent) appear to be “high-frequency cross-utilizers” who used the services of three or more organizations. Most cross-utilizers found in the roster dataset are children, which is the primary

subpopulation served by most organizations housed in THEARC. Figure 1 visualizes the patterns of single- and multiorganization use by participants in the roster analysis.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Cross-Utilization Patterns of Organizations Included in the Roster Analysis**



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Source: THEARC roster dataset, September 2018.

Notes: Percentages represent the proportions of participants at each organization also active at other organizations between January and September 2018, based on organizations' participant rosters. Circle size is proportional to the percentage of the organization's enrollment being shared and does not represent absolute enrollment size. The lines depict connections between two organizations that shared at least one participant.

### BBAR's Central Role

Not surprisingly, BBAR itself functions as an important nexus of cross-utilization at THEARC. When one participant from the roster dataset was matched across two or more organizations, BBAR was most often one of the two organizations being cross-utilized. Based on documentation and interview data, the reasons appear to be that BBAR activities draw numerous residents from the surrounding communities to THEARC, if even just for short-term activities, like events and performances, and that

BBAR staff are adept at promoting their programs and activities internally to participants drawn to THEARC campus by on-site partners. For example, children enrolled in educational programs on THEARC campus often go on field outings to BBAR Farms. In addition, BBAR staff actively advertise and refer BBAR participants and campus visitors to on-site partners as a function of BBAR’s coordinator/landlord role at THEARC. As will be discussed later, BBAR staff host the reception desks in both the east and west buildings of the core campus. Qualitative data suggest that these referrals may often result in the enrollment of participants at the receiving organizations; however, it was not possible to conclusively validate the exact direction of referral from one organization to another via analysis of participant roster data.

### Other Partner Organizations with Robust Patterns of Cross-Utilization

The Children’s Health Center at THEARC, the Washington School for Girls, and The Washington Ballet stand out for the high proportion of participants (ranging from 60 to 75 percent) who are engaged with at least one other organization on the campus (table 1). As noted above, BBAR stands out for connecting to all seven other organizations included in the roster analysis, as well as for having the dominant share of cross-utilizers from across these organizations. But the relative proportion of participants BBAR itself shares with resident partner organizations is much lower, at 29 percent, likely because of the large number of people who frequent THEARC only for BBAR-sponsored drop-in activities, like the farmers’ market or a performance.

**TABLE 1**  
**Participant Cross-Utilization among Eight Organizations at THEARC**

Organization	Total participants in dataset	No cross-utilization (%)	Shared with other organizations (%)	Shared, excluding BBAR (%)
BBAR	6,075	71	29	--
Boys & Girls Club	551	84	16	11
Children’s Health Center	2,241	28	72	4
The Washington Ballet	280	40	60	16
Levine Music	101	73	27	15
Washington School for Girls	59	25	75	69
Trinity	28	61	39	32
ArtReach GW	46	59	41	35

Source: THEARC roster dataset, September 2018.

Note: BBAR = Building Bridges Across the River.

Participants from the Children’s Health Center were also found on the rosters of all seven other organizations at THEARC included in the roster analysis during the period analyzed. The rosters from

ArtReach GW, the Boys & Girls Club, The Washington Ballet, and the Washington School for Girls each revealed participant connections to at least five other organizations on the campus during the period under study. Levine Music had a participant connection to four other organizations, and Trinity had two. Trinity’s relatively low number of connections to other organizations in the roster analysis may be because of the difference in populations served; Trinity is a postsecondary education institution only for adults. Although BBAR serves a wide range of adults and children across all its activities, the other partners included in the roster analysis focus all or most of their services on children. Trinity’s connection to the Children’s Health Center likely reflects mothers who take their children there.

A deeper look at the data reveals other patterns in the roster dataset and bolsters the finding that BBAR is an important nexus for cross-utilization. In the case of the Children’s Health Center, almost all of its cross-utilizers were shared with BBAR, with only about 4 percent of its roster shared with other organizations. Likewise, the majority of Washington Ballet cross-utilizers were shared with BBAR, with only about 16 percent of its roster shared across five other organizations. The Washington School for Girls shared a large proportion of its roster (32 percent) with BBAR (table 2), and it also shared a much larger proportion of participants (69 percent) across four other organizations during the time period analyzed.

**TABLE 2**  
**Cross-Utilization by Organization**  
*Percentage of shared participants*

	Shared with all other organizations	BBAR	Boys & Girls Club	Children’s Health Center	The Washington Ballet	Levine Music	Washington School for Girls	Trinity	ArtReach GW
Boys & Girls Club	16	9	--	4	2	0	6	0	1
Children’s Health Center	72	70	1	--	1	0	1	0	0
The Washington Ballet	60	49	3	9	--	3	1	0	1
Levine Music	27	16	0	1	10	--	0	0	4
Washington School for Girls	75	32	53	25	3	0	--	0	3
Trinity	39	36	0	32	0	0	0	--	0
ArtReach GW	41	11	17	7	4	9	4	0	--

Source: THEARC roster dataset, September 2018.

Notes: BBAR = Building Bridges Across the River. The rows will not sum to total “shared with all other organizations” because individuals may be active in more than one other organization.

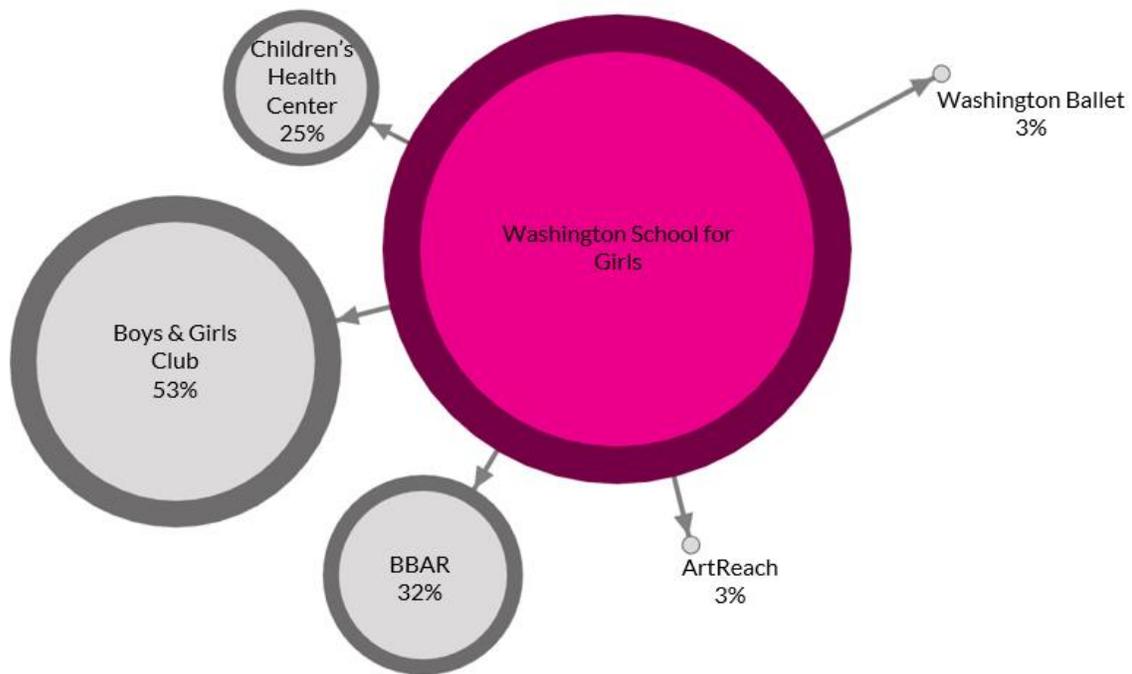
The robust cross-utilization observed among students on the Washington School for Girls roster, when combined with qualitative data, yields potentially valuable insights. Figure 2 displays the

organizations with which the Washington School for Girls shares students and the percentage of the school's students who attend the other organizations. As discussed more in the next section, most of the on-site partners the Urban team interviewed said their participant referrals to other on-site partners were informal. The Washington School for Girls uses strategic referrals and even formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) to encourage student cross-utilization to the other organizations on campus. These practices likely explain why 69 percent of the students at the THEARC-based middle school facility also participate in the services of another organization on THEARC campus excluding the BBAR nexus.

FIGURE 2

**A Pattern of Cross-Utilization**

*How students at the Washington School for Girls use other organizations*



Source: THEARC roster dataset, September 2018.

Note: The percentages represent the share of students who were enrolled at the Washington School of Girls between January and September 2018 and who also reported as active or enrolled in the activities and programs of other organizations during this period. Participants may be engaged at more than one other organization.

There appear to be three main reasons the Washington School for Girls has both a high cross-utilization rate for participants and a relatively high number of organizations with which these

students are shared. First, the school is very intentional about “outsourcing” extracurricular activities, such as art classes, after-school care, and health clinic functions, to other on-site partners. For example, the school has established an MOU with the Boys & Girls Club to provide after-school care for many of its students. Second, it requests that parents sign a release so that students can use the Children’s Health Center as the de facto school clinic. Third, it partners with on-site organizations to provide programming to its students during the school day, such as dance classes from The Washington Ballet and lessons in urban farming at BBAR Farms.

## Special Forms of Cross-Utilization

Below we provide additional analysis and data on unique forms of cross-utilization. The first section describes households that cross-utilize via siblings using the services of different organizations on THEARC campus. We also describe “high-frequency” cross-utilization, which we define as participation across three or more organizations, besides BBAR, located on THEARC campus. Finally, we provide a few insights we gathered about potential cross-utilization by parents and grandparents of child participants through the interviews we conducted. Unfortunately, we cannot offer as many insights on multigenerational cross-utilization within families (e.g., a parent and child, or “two-generation” cross-utilization) based on the roster dataset as we had hoped to do during this phase in the study because we could not obtain enough roster records for adults to render even a preliminary finding on potential two-generation patterns.

### High-Frequency Cross-Utilization by Siblings

Analysis of cross-utilization by children within the same households suggests that instances of sibling-driven cross-utilization in 2018 were modest but may be prevalent enough to warrant closer examination in a future phase of this study. We sometimes refer to children living in the same household as “siblings” for this analysis, although we have no information on their actual relationships. We identified households by matching last name, street name, and street number. This method limited false matches in multifamily dwellings, but may have overlooked shared households, including children with different last names. We faced several other limitations in conducting this analysis. Gaps in the roster data obtained from the original 11 organizations providing participant records, particularly incomplete address information, required us to rely on BBAR roster data to identify and anchor a sample of multichild households across only the following 6 organizations: AppleTree, BBAR, the Bishop Walker School, the Boys & Girls Club, the Children’s Health Center, and

the Washington School for Girls. Bishop Walker School and AppleTree were too new to the campus to be included in the full roster analysis discussed above, but their data were still useful for making preliminary inferences about sibling-driven cross-utilization on THEARC campus. Across these organizations, we determined which participants lived together in households by matching available data elements across participant rosters. The matching technique we used was conservative to avoid false matches, but it also likely caused us to miss sibling matches for some households.

Across the six organizations we could match for this subanalysis, we found 2,903 households with children (3,754 children in total) who were active at THEARC during the period under study. Of these households, 640 (22 percent) had more than one child enrolled in a program at THEARC. Table 3 displays our preliminary findings on sibling cross-utilization within and across the six organizations.

**TABLE 3**  
**Patterns of Sibling Cross-Utilization across Six Partner Organizations at THEARC**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Households with at least one child on the roster</b>	<b>Households with more than one child on the roster</b>	<b>Households with a child on the roster and a different child on another organization's roster</b>
BBAR	2,903	548	561
Children's Health Center	721	84	161
Boys & Girls Club	549	47	80
Washington School for Girls	59	1	17
Bishop Walker School	81	9	15
AppleTree	92	2	6

Source: THEARC roster dataset, September 2018.

Note: BBAR = Building Bridges Across the River.

### High-Frequency Cross-Utilization by Individual Participants

As discussed above, most cross-utilizers appear on the rosters of only two other organizations at THEARC, and one of those organizations was often BBAR. Over the roster analysis period, only 12 participants appeared on the rosters of three or more organizations that were not BBAR. When the research team considers limitations in the roster dataset alongside the qualitative data we collected, we surmise that our quantitative data on cross-utilization probably underestimates the number of participants who interacted with three or more organizations from January to September 2018.

To learn more about the potential for high-frequency cross-utilization, we looked closer at the 12 people we could find in the roster dataset who participated in programs offered by at least three organizations that were not BBAR. Of these 12 participants, 9 were students shared by the

Washington School for Girls and the Boys & Girls Club. An arts partner was typically the third organization used by this subset of 12 high-frequency utilizers.

Between the Washington School for Girls and the Boys & Girls Club, the direction of referral appears to be from the school to the club. The school shares more than half (53 percent) of participants with the club, but the club shares only about 5 percent of its participants with the school. In addition, although many organizations at THEARC release their enrolled children to the Boys & Girls Club after their programming period ends so that the children have a supportive place to wait for their parents to pick them up, the Boys & Girls Club staff say they rarely refer their participants to other organizations, viewing their organization as a “receiving” organization at THEARC.

We interviewed three of the nine high cross-utilizing students alongside their parents to learn more about why and how they cross-utilize among organizations at THEARC. In every case, the families started out by acknowledging the Washington School for Girls as the anchor for their participation in the services of other organizations at THEARC. Parents spoke to the quality of the education the school offered to their daughters, as well as add-ons such as extended days, Saturday school, and advanced preparation for college. The daughters cited their sense of belonging to a larger community and enriching classes offered by the school as major contributors to the quality of their experience on THEARC campus. In addition, all three parents were vocal in their praise for the strong sense of community the Washington School for Girls had built among its students, families, and alumni. The parents cited the Washington School for Girls community as an essential support in times of family need, with one parent referring to the school’s free tuition and caring staff as lifelines during the financial and emotional turmoil of divorce.

For both parents and children, their explanations for cross-utilizing with the Boys & Girls Club was straightforward. Students appreciate the fun and friends they have at the club, with special events like Halloween parties being top of mind. Parents appreciate knowing that their children have a safe and enriching environment in which to stay after school (or during summer breaks) while they wait for their parents to pick them up after work. Because the hand-off arrangement between the school and club is seamless and safe—per the formal MOU between the organizations—the strategic leveraging of the colocation appears to be an implicit driver of each family’s positive regard for the role of both organizations.

Among the three families interviewed, the additional organizations with which they had cross-utilized included The Washington Ballet, ArtReach GW, Levine Music, and the Phillips Collection. One student who had taken a ballet class acknowledged with chagrin that even though the class was good,

her interest in dance had fizzled out soon after it began; her mother pointed to the opportunity as a valuable “live and learn” experience for her child. One parent spoke to a number of ways she had also become involved in services at THEARC. Along with attending a parent-child art class at ArtReach GW with her daughter, she serves as a Phillips Collection ambassador in their Create-While-You-Wait program, assisting families with arts and crafts. Additionally, she spoke to the value she found in a women’s group sponsored by the Phillips Collection; it convenes in the evening once a month to offer social support, crafting, and meditation exercises, in addition to child care. Please note that connections from the Washington School for Girls to Levine Music and the Phillips Collection were surfaced by the interviews but are not shown in our discussion of the roster data because of some of the data limitations discussed in the methods section of this brief.

In all three cases, the students and parents have also used services from BBAR, making it the fourth organization with which they cross-utilize services. All parents noted with appreciation that they had obtained fresh produce from THEARC farmers’ market, which is a community-supported agriculture program through which BBAR Farms provides a share of harvested fresh fruits and vegetables to THEARC’s participants and residents of the surrounding community. The families also attended performances in THEARC theaters, including Black History Month presentations, *The Nutcracker*, and musical performances by children at the Boys & Girls Club and the Washington School for Girls. Students noted that they participated in activities with THEARC programs through the Washington School for Girls and the Boys & Girls Club, including learning about THEARC Farm and taking part in science-focused activities at the creek on THEARC’s campus.

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*The Boys & Girls Club is always introducing the kids to new things and helping them grow and mature into wonderful people. My older daughter went to a singing conference in Atlanta that they paid for.*

*—A Washington School for Girls parent from a high-frequency cross-utilizing family*

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Interestingly, and in keeping with the data reported in the previous section, two high-frequency cross-utilizers have siblings who have used the same or other organizations at THEARC. One parent said that all three of her children had participated in the Boys & Girls Club and that both of her daughters had been students at the Washington School for Girls. This whole family spends most of their free time at THEARC, picking up activities that are happening when they arrive and using the

facilities at the Boys & Girls Club. The parent noted that she felt that THEARC was a safe haven for her family, a place where her children are consistently engaged in interesting enrichment activities and a positive community.

## **Intergenerational Services Offered at THEARC**

Through the interviews, we heard about a sampling of programs across THEARC tailored to parents and guardians, sometimes in conjunction with their children. As mentioned earlier, ArtReach GW offers a class for parents and children to create art together, building quality time for the pair. The Phillips Collection offers a women's group that is paired with child care to allow space for mothers to decompress and spend time on themselves.

The Children's Health Center in particular takes a whole-family approach to their work, with their suite of services aimed at supporting parents and guardians. Because of its long-standing presence in the community, starting with its mobile units, the Children's Health Center has been able to serve sometimes four or five generations of families, building supportive, trusting relationships. When new parents are expecting a baby, reports a Children's Health Center interviewee, they know where to go to receive services because they received care there themselves and have ongoing trusting relationships with the staff at the center. The medical and administrative team at the Children's Health Center provides around-the-clock support through phone and email to parents, and the center assists their patients with getting needed services beyond basic health care, including stable housing, financial assistance, food security, and mental health services.

Two clinically licensed social workers are on site to assist and advocate for families, to design programming to support the whole family, and to strategically bridge the services offered at THEARC. The social workers provide case management, working directly and one-on-one with patients and their families to navigate services and get them the support they need. They lead support group series for parents to improve parenting skills and workshops targeted to parenting grandparents.

## **Key Drivers of Cross-Utilization**

Based on data from interviews we conducted with staff and families at THEARC and inferences from the roster dataset of participants during 2018, there appear to be five key drivers of service use across organizations by participants. These drivers are ordered below by the research team's

assessment of the relative volume of cross-utilization they appear to generate. However, as discussed above, drawing fixed conclusions at this early stage of the research is not possible.

## **Self-Referral**

The primary driver of cross-utilization appears to be self-referral by participants and their families. Once participants are on the campus, they often take the lead on investigating what services are available to them and selecting what would best fit their needs. They typically get this information by walking around THEARC and seeing what services are available, viewing flyers and print materials on site, and inquiring for more information from staff at the reception desks. Because most participants in THEARC's services are children, this browsing of other providers is done predominantly by parents, but staff from a few arts organizations report that children occasionally ask their parents to enroll them in their programs after seeing a class or activity while passing a venue.

## **Reception Desks**

The second-largest driver of cross-utilization appears to be the efforts of staff at THEARC East and West's reception desks. The reception desk at THEARC East provides a central location for displaying print materials from each on-site partner and flyers about upcoming programming. The handful of participants we interviewed said this is one of the main ways they learn about the services on site. The desks are also always staffed by at least one BBAR staff member who is available to provide information, answer questions, and manage displayed materials. According to the front desk staff Urban interviewed, the on-site partners provide the print materials and place them on the desk, but the front desk staff is responsible for managing what is displayed and removing out-of-date information. Although literature from external organizations is welcome in small kiosks elsewhere in THEARC, only literature from on-site partners is maintained at the reception desk. Reception staff also serve as a point of navigation and provide referrals for people walking through the front door. Potential participants regularly approach BBAR staff in search of recommendations for services that might fit a need. The staff provide some additional information about on-site programming and direct visitors to the different organizations, sometimes calling partner staff to greet the visitors themselves. BBAR reception desk staff are enthusiastic about their role in providing customer service to THEARC's visitors, especially to families who are from the high-poverty neighborhoods adjacent to the facility and need low- or no-cost supportive services.

## Stated Agreements between Partners

The third driver of cross-utilization appears to be formal and semiformal agreements across partner organizations to provide a continuum of care for participants, including educational enrichment for children. Many of the efforts carried out by BBAR staff—including and beyond the reception desk staff—are laid out in a written MOU between BBAR and each of its on-site partners. Other examples include the semiformal relationship Levine Music has with the Boys & Girls Club to provide after-programming care, as well as the therapeutic music program it coordinates for participants referred to them by the Children’s Health Center.

Though not uncommon, these sorts of semiformal verbal understandings were mostly used sporadically (not systematically) by some partners to direct clients from one organization to a specific service in another (typically in just one direction), often introducing participants to a receiving organization they might never have used otherwise. As discussed above, the Washington School for Girls and a few other partners now use a more strategic combination of formal agreements and clear verbal understandings to, in effect, make THEARC campus a seamless extension of their own campuses.

Since the first phase of this research project began, the other two schools, the Bishop Walker School and AppleTree, which are both relatively new arrivals on campus, have started following a similar model of proactive partnership with other resident partners to extend the learning and supports they can offer to their students and families. Both schools coordinate with the Children’s Health Center for health services for their students, and the Bishop Walker School has its meals for its students provided by a new partner on site, DC Central Kitchen. The Meditation Center just began meditation courses at AppleTree’s Parent Café in July. In addition, the Bishop Walker School also plans to partner with The Meditation Center to offer meditation sessions for teachers, administrators, and students. Both partnerships will focus on using meditation to combat stress. Many partners described in this paragraph were not included in the roster analysis because of their relatively short tenure on campus when this study began.

The Children’s Health Center has also strategically partnered across THEARC. The two social workers previously mentioned are tasked with planning programming for the patients and bringing health education and support to the community. Although some of these programs have previously been mentioned, it is worth noting the coordinated suite of services promoted by the Children’s Health Center. They have coordinated with the arts partners on site to offer music therapy classes for their patients and to provide arts opportunities for families as they wait for their appointments. As

mentioned, the health center has built partnerships with each of the schools on campus to serve as their school clinic and to offer additional programming, such as a 16-week tween group for students at the Washington School for Girls that focuses on social-emotional growth and coordinating dental hygiene and educational workshops for the Bishop Walker School.

The Children's Health Center coordinates with the food resources at THEARC to also promote access to healthy foods for their patients and the community. The health center pairs with THEARC Farm to implement Produce Plus, a DC initiative that makes healthy foods available and affordable to low-income community members through farmers' markets. They support DC Central Kitchen in their implementation of the Summer Lunch Program, which provides free lunches to ensure DC children continue to have food security through summer break. The Children's Health Center distributes the lunches created by DC Central Kitchen to the community so that children do not need to come to the facility to receive the lunch.

## Facility Sharing and Colocation Support

The fourth driver of cross-utilization is the sharing of physical space and facilities on THEARC campus. According to staff, the partners at THEARC frequently leverage BBAR's facilities and the facilities of other partners for programming. The arts programs and the schools often use the theaters at THEARC that are managed by BBAR to put on performances by their students and participants, and the Bishop Walker School holds its end-of-year party in the parking lot. The parent organization of The Washington Ballet brings The Washington Ballet Company to perform *The Nutcracker* at THEARC theater every year before it moves to the Kennedy Center. Several partners also routinely use THEARC's community meeting rooms and black box theater for board meetings. The Children's Health Center uses THEARC's meeting rooms to hold their workshops and group meetings. When the Children's Health Center and Building Bridges to a Better Life decided to team up for a health fair, BBAR supported the fair by allowing it to be held in the parking lot and throughout THEARC's facilities and offering free materials—such as bouncy houses—for the event.

Partners often also leverage the facilities and support of other partners on site. Many regularly use the gymnasium at the Boys & Girls Club for physical education and to host larger events. The Children's Health Center hosts a holiday party in the gymnasium every year for more than 400 of its patients and their families. The youth in the iCAN program will support the holiday party by offering their technical support free of charge. The Phillips Collection collaborates with the Children's Health Center to offer programming such as Create-While-You-Wait for families waiting for their doctor's

appointments, extending the health center's waiting room area. Having the Children's Health Center on site offers all partners the security of having medical attention easily available if someone becomes sick or is injured at the partners' events or programming.

### **Informal Staff Referrals**

The fifth driver of cross-utilization is the informal staff-referral practices of on-site partner organizations. At the time of the interviews we conducted with staff of the older resident partners during fall 2018, strategies to encourage cross-utilization were not something most staff of the resident partners had thought about, with the exception of the Children's Health Center and the Washington School for Girls. Many staff we interviewed reported that they simply referred clients to other services when they learned someone had an interest in a particular service or thought another program might be a better fit. Other staff we interviewed had an interest in promoting cross-utilization but had not yet invested the time to discuss with other organizations how they could partner together. But since the spring of 2018, this pattern appears to be changing.

## **A Rising Tide of Collaboration**

The formality and pace of collaboration among resident partners at THEARC picked up dramatically over the course of this study primarily because of increased efforts by BBAR and the resident partners to intentionally make meaningful collaboration the top priority for partner-to-partner interactions. As a result, many of the data and insights offered above do not reflect the increased cross-utilization that may have emerged as a result of recent connections made among on-campus partners. However, the data above may reflect how cross-utilization looks in a well-run colocation before the point at which partners collectively boost their strategic focus on cross-utilization.

This observation is grounded in several factors. The first factor is methodological: the design of this phase of the cross-utilization study relied on data collected over two distinct time periods. The roster and survey data the Urban team collected primarily covered the year before the study began, from January to September 2018. Our qualitative data, on the other hand, were collected from October 2018 to July 2019.

The second factor is the formative nature of the study itself. BBAR invited Urban to conduct this study to create a continuous-improvement feedback loop for collaboration and to learn if and how

any increased cross-utilization of services might benefit participants. That the study itself may have generated a modest amount of increased collaboration is not surprising.

The third and most important factor is the heightened intentionality over the past year with which BBAR has pursued their long-standing goal to increase partner collaboration for the purpose of increasing participant cross-utilization. The phases of BBAR's efforts with regard to partner collaboration can be mapped as follows.

**1997–2004:** *BBAR is incorporated as a nonprofit, and development of THEARC begins.* This event was followed by a period of fundraising and construction of the original east campus building. The idea of building a community center in Southeast DC was first conceived by Chris Smith, CEO of the DC-based developer WC Smith.

**2005–09:** *THEARC opens its doors, and early programming begins.* The first partners in THEARC were the Boys & Girls Club, the Children's Health Project of DC, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Covenant House, Levine Music, the Parklands Community Center, The Washington Ballet, the Washington Middle School for Girls, and Trinity University. Lynnita Jones, who would become the community engagement director for BBAR in 2018, was a member of the first dance group to perform on THEARC's main theater stage.

**2009–15:** *Early efforts to increase collaboration produce lessons learned but few results.* The BBAR board made increased collaboration among partners one of the goals for its five-year strategic plan. Rahsaan Bernard, who would become the BBAR president and CEO in 2017, was a member of the consulting team brought in by the board to support planning and subsequent implementation efforts. Many of the early efforts revolved around a new software system to capture attendance among the nine resident partners of THEARC at that time. These efforts and the software itself were unsuccessful. Says Bernard,

We thought we could use technology to capture the power of collaboration, but the complexities of making it work for all nine partners plus the human capital required to maintain this data capture were extremely difficult. Technology requires human intervention, and if the human intervention is lackluster, it's all lackluster. We asked all partners to use scanners to see who is entering into suites, but when the data was compiled for all, it was grossly incomplete. We centralized it by signing in and asking participants to identify what partner they were there to visit, then scrubbed the sign-in sheets against partner enrollment rosters. The sign-in sheet is a [low-tech and more effective] version of what [the software] was trying to do.

In 2015, the BBAR board decided to add a 93,000-square-foot building on the west side of the property and develop new lease agreements, which included a subsection for data collection and a

retooled partners' handbook to require greater efforts by resident partners to collaborate, collect data, and to reduce barriers to access for low-income DC residents.

**2015–17:** *A more connected campus begins to take shape.* Existing partners started signing new lease agreements in 2016. Bernard became president of THEARC in 2017, identifying his top priorities as retooling the mission to be fully reflective of all the work of BBAR, elevating the name recognition of the parent organization, boosting the organizational health of BBAR, and building a technology infrastructure and more participant cross-utilization at THEARC.

**2018–today:** *Greater intentionality about collaboration and cross-utilization takes hold.* The new west campus building opened in 2018, with new resident partners signing leases and filling important gaps in service at THEARC, as identified by BBAR. Specialists like Jones, the community engagement director, and Meisha McCloud, the community engagement manager, joined a growing BBAR staff. Monthly partner meetings, which had been convened by BBAR from the start, continued, but with a renewed focus toward achieving and measuring intentional and meaningful collaboration. Today, the meetings function as an important venue for relationship building and the development of referrals and formal agreements to boost cross-utilization. Urban was hired to document and support continuous improvement in mid-2018. In late 2018, BBAR leaders and the resident partners participated in an ideation session hosted by the Association for Managers of Innovation to increase collaboration at THEARC. At the June 2019 partner meeting, BBAR staff launched *thearc-partners.com*. This is an online portal intended to facilitate opportunities for collaboration among partner organizations through a file-sharing network, an automated facilities management system, and accessible contact information for each partner organization.

While discussing elements of the timeline laid out above, Bernard reflects on BBAR's strategic niche at THEARC by first pointing to BBAR's new theory of change, which states that BBAR's ultimate goal is to reduce structural barriers to social and economic mobility to build a more equitable city. Says Bernard,

This theory of change [includes] three buckets: arts and culture, economic opportunity, and health and well-being—most of our 14 partners fall into these buckets in some way.... Because of this theory of change, we choose [partners and] projects from those three areas based on strengths, and we elect not to create redundant programming. [BBAR itself] execute[s] programs based on what we're good at. We're great at managing the theater, so we program the theater. We don't do visual arts, because we're not good at that, but our partner ArtReach is.... We will not bring another girls' middle school on campus, but we did bring in a boys' school. [And so on.]

## Potential Benefits of Cross-Utilization

Data from our interviews with families and staff across the on-site partners suggest that a small number of cross-utilizers may be accessing services across on-site partners at THEARC in ways that fulfill some or many of the social and economic opportunities they need to thrive. Indeed, participants may be pulling together—perhaps even unintentionally—“packages” of support that are directly related to the nonmedical factors and contexts that promote positive physical and mental health, often referred to as the “social determinants of health.”

Social and economic factors like financial security, safe housing, and high-quality early childhood education have profound effects on health and well-being, and these social determinants of health may have particularly deep implications for the economic and social mobility of children as they advance into adulthood. Although research is only beginning to pinpoint the many direct and indirect pathways that link social experiences with health and disease, several such pathways have emerged as potentially relevant. Children who grow up in underresourced communities often face immediate health risks, such as poor nutrition and exposure to lead, allergens, and other pollutants, and they are also more likely to face health-depleting conditions as adults. Emerging neuroscientific evidence suggests that nonnormative stress, such as the death of a parent or strong, frequent, or prolonged stress without the buffer of a supportive adult, can disrupt the developing brain architecture in children, leading to a weak foundation for learning, behavior, and health (Shonkoff et al. 2012).

Consistent with our insights on the drivers of cross-utilization, there appear to be **two primary mechanisms for how key social and economic supports may come together via cross-utilization of organizations at THEARC. The first is the intuitive marshaling of supports for their children and families by proactive parents**, who are often aided in their efforts by the structured service navigation activities of BBAR staff and informal or semiformal referrals from on-site partners. Time and again during interviews, staff cited parents as the common denominator for how children go from using the services of one organization at THEARC to using the services of other organizations. This finding may explain why there were so few formal MOUs in place between organizations during the first phase of this study, except those instituted by BBAR with all partners and the Washington School for Girls MOU with the Boys & Girls Club. Staff often see parents as the only legitimate vehicle (physically or legally) for delivering children from one provider’s door at THEARC to another. For example, the Boys & Girls Club will not allow participants from other organizations to use their services after school unless a parent has formally enrolled their child in the club and signed off on the transfer of the child from one activity to another.

*The second mechanism for pulling together varied key supports through cross-utilization appears to be formal and semiformal agreements between organizations*, which organize and maintain strategies for helping families find their way to services and supports that cover the key needs of children (and, much less frequently, adults), especially in the domains of education, health, and community context. The examples provided on agreements among the Washington School for Girls, the Boys & Girls Club, BBAR, Levine Music, and the Children’s Health Center illustrate how formal and semiformal agreements between organizations may be an important strategy for partners to facilitate access to the social determinants of health for more families than just the handful who currently use their intuition and ad hoc help from various staff members to make the most of what THEARC can offer.

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*THEARC is a safe place for families, where a child can get arts enrichment and after-school activities in one place.*

*—A resident partner staff member*

*I get peace of mind that my kids are safe while they are here. That is priceless.*

*—A parent of a high cross-utilizer*

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To illustrate how parent action and interorganization agreements may function to assemble “packages” of supports that families of THEARC need to thrive, below we have grouped examples of THEARC services and supports under one of the five domains outlined by Healthy People 2020 in its organizing framework for the key social determinants of health:<sup>4</sup>

- Economic stability
  - » Parent action: Parents pursue free tuition from the Washington School for Girls and other free or low-cost supports offered by partners to make ends meet.
  - » Agreement: Services affordable to families with low or moderate incomes are at the heart of almost all formal partnerships BBAR has with its resident partners. The Produce Plus program between the Children’s Health Center and BBAR Farms assists low-income families in securing healthy foods.

- Education
  - » Parent action: Educational opportunities for children—for example, one-day field trips to BBAR Farms and enrollment in the on-site schools—are frequently cited by both parents and staff as a key factor in drawing families onto the campus.
  - » Agreement: A combination of formal and semiformal agreements is used by the Washington School for Girls to make THEARC campus an extension of its own campus and to offer enrichment activities and new experiences for its students.
  
- Health and health care
  - » Parent action: New utilizers frequently approach THEARC East reception desk in search of the Children’s Health Center.
  - » Agreement: A therapeutic music program is offered by Levine Music for patients from the Children’s Health Center.
  
- Neighborhood and built environment
  - » Parent action: Parents leverage THEARC facility and organizations overall as a safe haven for their children.
  - » Agreement: Most children must enter the Boys & Girls Club through its formal outside-facing entrance. The Washington School for Girls students enter more seamlessly through internal double doors behind the first-floor staircase in the East Campus building as per the MOU between the two organizations.
  
- Social and community context
  - » Parent action: Parents receive support for both themselves and their children through the Phillips Collection–sponsored women’s group, the Children’s Health Center’s support groups for tweens, youth, and parents or guardians, and the supportive community at the Washington School for Girls.
  - » Agreement: The Phillips Collection sponsors activities for children and adults while they wait for their appointments at the Children’s Health Center, and the health center has programs offering social-emotional growth and support through groups coordinated with other partners and for the broader community.

Staff from the partner agencies and parents interviewed have seen the impact the services have had on individuals and families who have participated in THEARC’s services. Stories told by interviewees described families who have been connected to services to support their positive development and security through THEARC that have led to more stable families and better

relationships between parents and children. There were many reports in which young people were exposed to new opportunities through THEARC programs—including STEM and arts programming and field trips—that affected their education and career trajectories. Staff report that the social-emotional support offered through a variety of partners—such as the Children’s Health Center’s tweens and youth support groups—has changed the way the youths involved reflect on their futures and aspirations.

## Recommendations

Because of the opportunities for feedback on partner collaboration and participant cross-utilization built into opportunities like the Association for Managers of Innovation ideation session, the monthly partner meetings, and the study itself, numerous recommendations on next steps for boosting cross-utilization have been generated over the past year. They are ordered by timing and catalogued by source below.

### **From the Ideation Session Hosted by the Association for Managers of Innovation**

- BBAR should continue to work as a centralizing force to coordinate efforts across nonprofits. BBAR can act as a common fundraising source and leverage marketing for services at THEARC.
- The monthly partner meetings could be reformatted to emphasize idea generation and design thinking over information-sharing.
- BBAR should create a common mission across partners, around which they can organize their efforts and link their individual missions to the core mission. One group at the Association for Managers of Innovation conference suggested that a common mission could be building resiliency—in individuals, in families, and in the community. At a recent monthly meeting, partners expressed interest in this concept.
- Because the nonprofit partners operate on limited budgets and have staff with already full workloads, BBAR should lead joint fundraising efforts focused on supporting the partners in strategizing and leveraging their own staff to participate in design thinking opportunities.
- BBAR should create a centralized data system that shares basic information on clients across organizations and a centralized enrollment process. Likewise, BBAR might create a Wiki-style website to share programmatic information across partners. This would allow for easy

updating that could be done by any of the resident partners' staff, and it would be accessible only by those who work at THEARC. This suggestion was implemented in June 2019.

### **From the Urban Research Team**

- BBAR's implicit assumption that cross-utilization is valuable to participants at THEARC appears to be valid. Efforts to promote it should continue.
- Strategically encouraging certain kinds of cross-utilization will produce better results if these efforts are aligned with target outcomes drawn from the social determinants of health or another framework, such as family and child resilience, per the related Association for Managers of Innovation recommendation above.
- Formal and semiformal agreements between resident partners are among the most effective methods of driving strategic cross-utilization at the organization level. Written agreements among partners should be strongly encouraged.
- Parent initiative on how they and their children cross-utilize services should be encouraged and supported with systematic outreach (e.g., light service navigation) to help them align to their own family goals, needs, and wishes (household- and family-level cross-utilization).
- Resident partner efforts to improve collection of roster data should continue because this will do a great deal to support the development of an effective cross-utilization strategy for THEARC.
- Data matching and analysis across rosters should continue on a periodic basis; however, a centralized system of data collection (e.g., swipe cards) does not appear to be helpful or practical for a colocation of this type, particularly where confidentiality restrictions often prevent the collection of comparable data across partners. In other words and in this case, older and more painstaking methods of matching (e.g., a third party, similar to Urban, examining sign-in spreadsheets using human protection protocols) appear to far exceed what more current technology has to offer.
- Parents and other participants should be asked for their recommendations during the next phase of partner efforts to boost cross-utilization.

## From BBAR and the Resident Partners

- Although most on-site partner staff acknowledge and express appreciation for BBAR's central role as a nexus for cross-utilization, many staff express a desire for BBAR to do more to specifically promote their organization's services, such as coordinated advertising for all the services at THEARC or building a common goal across partner agencies.
- Efforts to improve roster data collection to capture patterns of cross-utilization by participants, including one-time activities, appear to be worth the effort and should be pursued by each partner. Partners look forward to and want to dive even deeper into various forms of data during monthly meetings.
- Promoting cross-utilization is valuable, but the partners have limited resources. BBAR should continue to take a proactive approach to assist in facilitating the setup of cross-utilization strategies.
- Partner organizations have noted that colocation is cost-effective. BBAR can enhance the cost-effectiveness of colocation by encouraging increasingly greater levels of cross-utilization.

## Conclusion

The journey from a set of colocated organizations to a holistic campus is painstaking, but the potential benefits are great, particularly if a common mission and set of outcomes are in place to organize partners. Although the data from this phase of the study are too preliminary to draw fixed conclusions, the intentional colocation of partners at THEARC produces potentially notable effects on the health and well-being of adults and children who cross-utilize them. This question merits further study, and this phase of the study has laid a good foundation for that inquiry.

# Notes

- <sup>1</sup> “American Community Survey 2013–2017 5-Year Estimates,” US Census Bureau, accessed October 22, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/table-and-geography-changes/2017/5-year.html>.
- <sup>2</sup> “American Community Survey 2013–2017 5-Year Estimates,” US Census Bureau, accessed October 22, 2019.
- <sup>3</sup> Diane Gross, “New Iona East day center to serve seniors east of the river, replicating successful Ward 3 program,” *The DC Line*, last updated June 17, 2019, <https://thedcline.org/2019/06/17/new-iona-east-day-center-to-serve-seniors-east-of-the-river-replicating-successful-ward-3-program/>.
- <sup>4</sup> “Social Determinants of Health,” Healthy People 2020, accessed October 22, 2019, <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>.

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## STATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

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