SIEMER INSTITUTE

2016 Program Evaluation

September 2017

ILLUMINOLOGY

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Executive Summary

Founded by Al and Barbara Siemer in 2011, Siemer Institute works to prevent family homelessness and to decrease school mobility, giving children from disadvantaged families a better chance to achieve academic success. In 2016, **86 Siemer Institute supported programs** in **53 communities** across the United States served over **8,400 families** and over **15,000 school-aged children**.

Programs that receive support from Siemer Institute use this funding to connect adults and children to a variety of services that help bring about longer-term stability. The flexible use of these funds, allowing each program to design and deliver services that are customized to meet the needs of its community, is one of Siemer Institute's signature attributes.

Overall, Siemer Institute supported programs achieved moderate to high levels of success in 2016 with regard to helping families achieve housing, financial, and educational stability.

2016 Accomplishments

Housing Stability

- **5,538** families obtained or maintained stable housing - **66%** of all families served
- Helping families **access public benefits** and **transportation** was associated with success on this core outcome
- More families are paying their mortgage or rent on time from 2014 to 2016

Financial Stability

- **3,313** families increased their income - **40%** of all families served
- More families reported increasing their income from 2014 to 2016, suggesting programs are improving their ability to help families in this way
- Helping families access **public benefits** and **transportation assistance** was associated with success on this core outcome
- Families are **planning more** (setting / achieving financial goals and maintaining a family budget) and are **obtaining employment** more often from 2014 to 2016

Educational Stability

- **8,256** families with at least one school-age child had no disruptive school moves **- 98%** of all such families
- From 2014 to 2016, the percentage of all school moves that were **disruptive decreased from 28% to 19%,** suggesting programs are doing a better job at helping families avoid unplanned moves.
- Employing **a strong "2-Gen" approach** and **helping with housing referrals** was associated with success on this core outcome
- Children had fewer school disciplinary incidents, better grades and higher levels of enrollment and attendance from 2014 to 2016

Executive Summary

Looking to the future, programs are interested in **receiving more technical assistance** as well as information about how to **track participants over time** and **manage data**. The 2016 Program Evaluation also uncovered a variety of steps and measures Siemer Institute could consider taking that would likely strengthen future evaluation efforts.

About Siemer Institute And This Report

Siemer Institute was founded by Al and Barbara Siemer in 2011 with the goal of **preventing family homelessness** and **reducing school mobility** to give children from disadvantaged families a better chance to achieve academic success. In 2016, community-based service providers that received funding from Siemer Institute were located in 53 communities across the United States and served more than 8,400 families and more than 15,000 school-aged children. These communities were clustered within 51 United Ways.

Siemer Institute works to improve children's educational opportunities by focusing on the context in which they live rather than more traditional educational factors (e.g. curriculum). Children who experience frequent housing moves, school moves, and homelessness are likely to have less academic success than children who do not experience these hardships.[1,2]

Siemer Institute works through the United Way network to fund programs that prevent family homelessness and school instability. These Siemer Institute supported programs are locally designed and locally managed to ensure they are responsive to immediate community needs; Siemer Institute supported programs typically provide intensive case management, direct financial assistance, housing support, and many other services to keep families in stable housing and empower them to remain stable in the future.

In 2014, Siemer Institute adopted a Shared Measurement Framework that collects the same data from every service provider. This framework has three important elements. First, it includes a program description in which each partner describes their primary intent, the types of services they offer, their partnerships, and their use of data. Second, it captures each partner's outputs (e.g., counts of program entrants and exits, total families served). Finally, it ensures that all partners are tracking the same outcomes. The Shared Measurement Framework includes outcomes in three areas: financial stability, housing stability, and educational stability.

The data collected through the Shared Measurement Framework described above provides the foundation for this program evaluation. All data are self-reported by the organizations funded by Siemer. This evaluation effort and the conclusions that come from it are only as strong and reliable as the data that are provided by the programs to Siemer Institute. Additional details about data are provided in the technical appendix.

Helping to round out this evaluation are insights, commentary, and suggestions shared by housing stability experts selected jointly with Siemer Institute staff. Overall, eleven

representatives of Siemer Institute supported programs completed a 30-minute confidential in-depth interview with Illuminology researchers. These representatives are associated with programs that had higher success rates on key outcome measures, programs that had lower success rates on key outcome measures, and those that had experienced a significant positive or negative performance change from 2014 to 2016. Additionally, a mix of program models was included, ranging from school based programs to those housed at a parent not for profit to those that are part of a larger campus that includes shelter care for homeless families.

Throughout this report, insights shared by these individuals are displayed via the use of gray call-out boxes. Additional findings from this research element are featured in an "Additional Insights" section at the end of this report.

This document is divided into four parts:
- Part 1 provides a brief descriptive overview of the Siemer Institute network.
- Part 2 summarizes the Siemer Institute network's outputs and outcomes from 2014 through 2016.
- Part 3 explores potential relationships between different service provider attributes and key program outcome measures.
- Part 4 includes a summary of findings and offers recommendations for the future.

Part 1: Descriptive Overview Of The Siemer Institute Network

Siemer Institute works through the United Way network to fund programs that prevent family homelessness and school instability. These programs are designed and managed by local service providers to ensure they are responsive to the needs of the community being served.

In 2016, a total of 86 Siemer Institute supported service providers offered direct services to families. Within a particular community (e.g., Orlando, FL), multiple service providers may receive financial support from Siemer Institute.

86 Siemer Institute supported Service Providers

53 Communities Served

PROGRAM INTENT

Those local service providers who were part of the Siemer Network in 2016 and in 2017 were asked to complete a Service Provider Profile. As part of this profile, these organizations were asked to describe (in their own words) their Siemer Institute supported program (e.g., a school-based program, a housing program, a financial capability program, etc.). The open-ended responses to this program description question were coded by a researcher into the categories shown in Table 1. These categories reflect Siemer Institute's measurement emphasis on housing, financial, and educational stability outcomes. Overall, the majority of the 2016 Siemer Institute supported service providers who completed this profile described their program as offering **housing stability services** (60%). Many programs (45%) also described their program as **helping families to become more financially stable**.

Table 1: Self-described Program Intent

% of 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n=80)	
Housing stability	60%
Financial stability	45%
School-based program	28%
Academic achievement	14%
Employment stability	10%

Note: Because multiple responses were allowed, percentages will not sum to 100.

"(This) is a homeless prevention program that helps families experiencing a housing crisis and temporary financial issues retain their housing and prevent them from becoming homeless."

"Longer-term housing/financial stability program for an area with a high concentration of generational poverty."

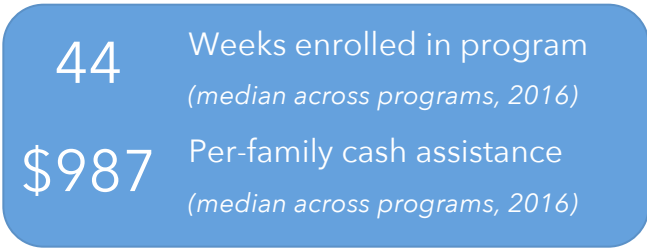*"We assist families in finding housing and provide case management services once they are stably housed."*

"A housing counseling program with a financial capability component."

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Each Siemer Institute supported program that completed the 2016 Service Provider Profile shared information about the length of time families were enrolled in their program, as well as some high-level metrics regarding the program's resources, including the number of full-time employees dedicated to the program and the average amount of cash assistance provided to each family. The median (or midpoint) of these average amounts was identified. A typical family spent a little less than a year in these programs in 2016, receiving nearly $1,000 in financial assistance. The
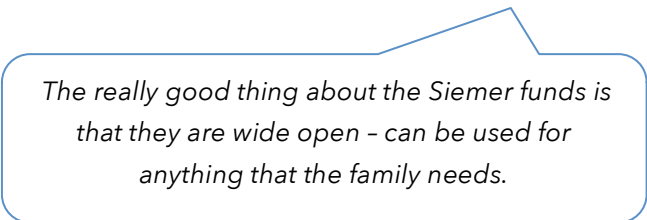
44 Weeks enrolled in program
(median across programs, 2016)
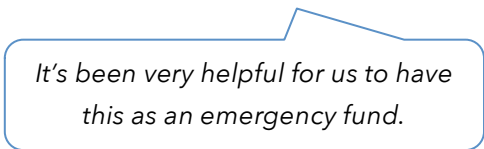
$987 Per-family cash assistance
(median across programs, 2016)

median number of paid full-time employees working in these programs was two; however, a number of programs had ten or more FTEs working with program participants.

Because Siemer Institute supported programs are customized to reflect the needs and nature of the community in which they are located, they are diverse. The range in the number of full time employees just described suggests this trend and just the handful of qualitative interviewees demonstrate this diversity. The interviewees represented programs that are housed in schools, within larger homelessness prevention efforts, or as stand-alone not-for-profits. Some work with populations that primarily speak English, some with refugees and some with undocumented immigrants. Some are in areas where affordable housing is plentiful; many struggle with high costs of living as a barrier to participant success. Several of them mentioned the flexible nature of the Siemer funds (in terms of what they can be used for) and how helpful that was to their success.

> *The really good thing about the Siemer funds is that they are wide open – can be used for anything that the family needs.*

> *It's been very helpful for us to have this as an emergency fund.*

Another obvious difference is that programs rely on a wide array of partners who refer families to different resources. Overall, schools are a major referral source for these programs, followed by internal referrals, family members or friends, and other community social service organizations. See Table 2.

Table 2: Referral Source Rankings

% of 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n=80)				
	Ranked 1st	**Ranked 2nd**	**Ranked 3rd**	**Other rank**
Schools	29%	12%	11%	49%
Internal referrals (within own organization)	15%	19%	9%	56%
Family member or friend	5%	16%	18%	61%
Other community social service organizations	8%	14%	17%	61%
Self-referral	17%	6%	13%	65%
211 information or other community referral program	4%	11%	9%	76%
Coordinated/centralized intake in community	11%	3%	4%	82%
Homeless assistance/shelters	5%	3%	5%	86%
Landlords	3%	7%	1%	89%
Churches, synagogues, or other faith organizations	1%	0%	1%	97%

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Across Siemer Institute supported programs in 2016, a fifth of participants were considered to be homeless, according to one of these definitions:

- HUD: Families who "lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" or will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence or are fleeing domestic violence situations;[1]

- McKinney-Vento definition, which focuses on children specifically, and the same lack of "a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" including shared housing, living in hotels, motels, camp grounds, cars, parks, substandard housing, public places, etc. due to economic hardship.[2]

Table 3: Overview Of Program Participant Demographics

Among 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n≈80)			
	Median %		**Median %**
Considered to be homeless	20%	African American/Black	50%
Employed	57%	Asian American/Asian	1%
Single parent/guardian families	75%	Latino(a)/Hispanic	10%
Undocumented immigrants	1%	White/European American	20%
		Other groups/multi-racial	5%

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[1]Paraphrased from https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=PIH2013-15HomelessQAs.pdf, retrieved 8/14/17
[2] Paraphrased from http://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv-def.php

Interestingly, ten programs reported that 99% or 100% of their participants were homeless at program entry; about half of these ten programs are rapid rehousing programs and follow the HUD definition of homelessness. Most of the others are school-based programs that follow the McKinney-Vento definition. Neither definition requires chronic homelessness; instead, families may be doubled up with friends or family rather than living on the street. Across the programs, over half of the participants were employed at program entry.

> ### *Insights From Housing Stability Experts*
>
> *Generally, interviewees said their prototypical family is a single parent household with 2 – 3 children and an (almost exclusively female) head of household who is un- or under-employed. Most parents are working minimum wage jobs. Several programs primarily serve families where English is not the primary language. Some programs work with refugee populations or with parents who are undocumented residents. Program staff said their most successful clients were those who gained employment or better employment while working with their Siemer Institute supported case manager.*
>
> *Protective factors identified by program staff focused on the resiliency of the individuals they work with and the nature of the communities they serve. Most are tight knit and collaborative – this seemed to be especially true for school based programs.*
>
> *Several interviewees cited expensive rental markets as the number one barrier impacting families they serve, along with difficulty getting and maintaining employment that could sustain a family. They also indicated that a lack of awareness of their rights as tenants and (in one community) a culture of abandoning a situation with a difficult landlord rather than fighting to maintain housing contributed to housing instability.*

Most programs reported having more demand for their services than supply, a common issue for not-for-profits, especially those serving people in poverty. How do programs know a "right fit" client who is best positioned to successfully transition from their Siemer funded program? What are signals that a client is not a good fit? Generally, program staff reported using various assessment tools and the knowledge and experience they have gained over time to identify clients who may not be a good match with the program.

Many program staff also said that motivation is a key indicator of right fit (see call out box, next page), while chronic long term issues (chronic unemployment, addiction, etc.) were major barriers to serving families. See the next call out box for more detail.

Insights From Housing Stability Experts

Program staff nearly unanimously mentioned "self-determination" or motivation as a key characteristic for working the program successfully, along with needs that can be addressed with a small financial investment. Previous employment history or a link to stable benefits that sustain the family is also a necessary, but not sufficient, factor that staff see as linked to success. Specifically, interviewees had this to say:

- *"Motivation or self determination is…key. We are looking for people who want and need support… We identify this by observing and working with them, but they also kind of identify themselves. You can't make people do it."*
- *"Needs to have intrinsic motivation because the program is client-led…People with a plan. Must show gumption. Helps if they've been part of programs prior."*
- *"They need to be interested in engaging with case management and be willing to change."*
- *"Self-motivation is key – people who come to us to enroll. We do a lot of reminder / attendance calls but not a lot of other hand-holding."*

Although staff do report using common assessment tools (e.g. the Siemer Institute intake form, the Arizona Self Sufficiency Matrix), several interviewees have personalized these tools to meet the needs of their program or generated their own assessment tools using in-house instruments or those used by partner agencies. In general, they cite their knowledge in working with these populations as a key to selecting families who are likely to succeed.

Several program staff pointed to a continuum of needs that ranges from very severe to not severe, with their sweet spot being somewhere in the middle. Families teetering on the edge of homelessness, perhaps those who have spent a few nights in a hotel or are doubled up, are commonly described. The case manager oriented nature of the intervention lends itself well to this subset of the population.

Most programs also had "wrong fit" criteria – things that were red flags that would typically lead to a referral to other programs that specialize in these areas. The most commonly mentioned characteristics were domestic violence (especially if it's in the initial crisis period when a person has just left the situation), severe mental illness, or drug addiction. Generally, it seems that more successful programs were more likely to have models that carefully screened families as opposed to programs that serve anyone who is interested in the program. This appears to be one of the biggest differences observed between school based and agency based models.

*As one program staff put it: [PROGRAM] is a **collaborative effort so… permanent barriers to acting on the case plan means a family is not a great fit (active child abuse, substance abuse, etc.). We need people who are motivated and will do what they can. We help them feel supported and give them a boost.***

SERVICES PROVIDED TO PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Nearly all Siemer Institute supported programs directly provide case management services and one-on-one financial coaching services to families, with case managers helping families set and meet goals to improve their housing and financial stability (see Table 4). Beyond these integral services, programs provided a wide variety of services to participating families – some directly via their own staff, and others indirectly via referrals to other organizations.

In 2016, Siemer Institute supported programs were less likely to directly provide housing classes or employment classes to their participants, instead relying on individualized (i.e., one-on-one) service delivery for these types of support.

Table 4: Services Provided To Families

% of 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n≈80)		
	Provided in-house[3]	**Provided via referral**	**Not offered**
Case management	98%	1%	1%
Financial coaching one-on-one	94%	6%	
Employment coaching one-on-one	79%	20%	1%
Housing counseling one-on-one	78%	20%	3%
Financial literacy classes	68%	32%	
Housing classes	41%	49%	10%
Employment classes	40%	54%	6%

*Services directly related to housing stability are highlighted in **dark blue**; services directly related to financial stability are highlighted in **light green**.*

As expected, service providers who described their program as primarily focused on financial stability were more likely than others to offer financial literacy classes in-house (83% vs. 57%, respectively). Also, service providers who described their program as primarily focused on housing stability were more likely than others to offer one-on-one housing counseling in-house (92% vs. 56%, respectively) or housing classes in-house (50% vs. 28%, respectively). This suggests that programs know their core strengths, which to them means focusing on helping families with financial stability or housing stability.

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[3] For Tables 4-6, service provision was classified as "Provided in-house" if program indicated (via its response to the 2016 Service Provider Profile) that it was provided "Exclusively in-house," "Mostly in-house," or "Equal mix of in-house and referrals." A response of "Mostly through referrals" or "Exclusively through referrals" led to the service being classified as "Provided via referral."

In 2016, many Siemer Institute supported programs directly provided other specific services to increase financial and housing stability. Nearly 90% of programs provided utility assistance, over 80% provided some financial assistance or rent arrears/mortgage assistance, and over three-quarters provided housing referrals or employment services (like job searches) in-house in 2016. Relatively few programs directly provided health, legal, or mental health/substance abuse services, or employment services like hard skills/job training, instead relying on referrals. This reinforces the importance of collaboration and partnerships with other organizations offering crucial services, a theme that recurs throughout this evaluation.

Table 5: Services Provided To Adults

% of 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n≈80)			
	Provided in-house	**Provided via referral**	**Not offered**
Utility assistance	88%	13%	
Financial assistance	83%	15%	1%
Rent arrears or mortgage assistance	83%	15%	3%
Housing referrals to landlords/property managers	78%	14%	9%
Employment services (job search, resume writing)	76%	24%	
Housing application assistance	76%	23%	1%
Deposits and/or moving assistance	73%	19%	9%
Negotiation/mediation with landlords	70%	23%	8%
Transportation assistance	66%	31%	3%
Public benefits screening and referrals	55%	41%	4%
Food (e.g., food pantry)	54%	46%	
Employment services (soft skills)	54%	44%	3%
Clothing	52%	44%	4%
Income tax assistance	38%	56%	6%
Adult education services (GED, etc.)	38%	61%	1%
Home ownership assistance	31%	55%	14%
IDA or matched savings	28%	35%	38%
Employment services (hard skills, etc.)	26%	70%	4%
Mental health and substance abuse services	24%	74%	1%
Medication assistance	20%	66%	14%
Home repair assistance	19%	59%	23%
Legal services	19%	79%	3%
Health services	17%	79%	4%

*Services directly related to housing stability are highlighted in **dark blue**; services directly related to financial stability are highlighted in **light green**.*

Insights From Housing Stability Experts

Most program staff said they offered assistance with obtaining public benefits, while acknowledging that many people come to them already connected to these resources. Those programs identified as more successful seemed to have a more systematic approach to this piece. One program described an innovative partnership with local county agencies whereby participants can actually complete enrollment for benefits at the campus where the program operates.

Many programs also offer transportation assistance, though some indicate this is less common since their goal is to help participants solve recurring issues like transportation rather than provide a Band-Aid for this problem. Nearly all will provide bus passes for job interviews or education purposes.

As shown in Table 6, nearly two-thirds of Siemer Institute supported programs in 2016 indirectly provided (i.e., via referral) services to help children improve their educational outcomes. Examples of this include tutoring or educational assistance, mentoring, afterschool programs, or summer programs. A reliance on indirect provision of these types of services aligns with how most providers described themselves as being a housing stability or financial stability program, as opposed to focusing on educational stability or academic achievement.

Table 6: Services Provided To Children

% of 2016 Siemer Institute service providers (n≈80)			
	Provided in-house	**Provided via referral**	**Not offered**
Financial literacy classes	58%	35%	6%
Parenting classes	45%	53%	3%
Life skills classes	43%	48%	9%
Summer programs	38%	61%	1%
Tutoring or educational assistance	35%	62%	3%
After school programs	35%	64%	1%
Family counseling services	35%	64%	1%
Personal enrichment classes	33%	58%	10%
Mentoring	31%	66%	3%
Child care or child care vouchers	29%	68%	4%
Mental health services	29%	70%	1%
Health services	11%	84%	5%

Programs' use of referrals also reflects the commitment of many programs to collaboration and community partnership. Several qualitative interviewees indicated that partnering with others in efforts to prevent homelessness was beneficial for several reasons: it eliminates the need to become "expert" in everything, reduces potential duplication of services and it lightens the load on case managers who can focus on really getting to know families, identify their strengths and serve as supports on their path to stable housing.

You lose some control but it takes an incredible load off the case managers and leverages subject matter experts. This frees up case managers to do more one on one time with clients. More relationship building, in-home budgeting, referrals and resource development.

It's an Integrative Collaboration model – large coalitions of agencies with wrap around services. [This model] allows the case managers to really dive deep into the issues the family is facing.

One organization shouldn't dominate the field. More people are willing to step up to the plate when everyone is invested in success… use strength based approach – what you're great at, you do. What we're great at, we do.

It's really about partnerships and collaborative work for collective impact.

2-GEN PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Two generation (2-Gen) programs create opportunities for families by simultaneously addressing the needs of parents and their children, so that both can succeed together.[1] This conceptual approach to program design and delivery means considering the needs of both adults and children when working to stabilize a family's housing situation.

In 2016, most Siemer Institute supported programs that completed a Service Provider Profile reported using a 2-Gen approach (81%). These programs were then asked to describe their approach for supporting adults and children simultaneously. These open-ended descriptions were coded by two researchers to determine the "level" of 2-Gen programming employed.

Currently there is no widely accepted definition of 2-Gen programming among the programs receiving funding from Siemer Institute. For the purposes of this coding task, we relied on some information provided by Siemer Institute staff. Specifically, the following definition of 2-Gen programming was provided to coders:

2Gen programs are those that attempt to meet the needs of parents and children in the same families. It basically uses the entire family as the focal point of the program, not just the adults or just the kids. They assess the needs of both, they work to address the needs of both, and they track the success of the work they do with both adults and kids.

2Gen programs are on a continuum. Some do a lot for adults and a little for kids, some do a lot for both, and so on. However, 2Gen programs need to be intentional and they need to have a meaningful focus on child and adult needs. If a program is ONLY offering a family night once or twice a year, but they aren't doing much else to meet the needs of adults and children in the same family, then it's a stretch to call it a 2Gen program.

Any disagreements between coders were resolved through discussion. Specially, each response was placed in one of the following categories:

(1) no 2-Gen programming was described or attempted

(2) 2-Gen programming may be a component but the description did not clearly communicate a synthesized, simultaneous approach to multi-generational needs assessment and service delivery

(3) 2-Gen programming is clearly a component of the program.

Overall, only about a quarter (26%) of the service providers clearly described a 2-Gen approach to their 2016 program. This does not mean that other programs are not using a 2-Gen approach; rather, their programming description (as provided to Siemer Institute) did not allow for such a judgment to be made. Prototypical service providers who seemed to have a strong grasp on how to deliver 2-Gen programming, judging by their response to the 2016 Provider Profile, described their intergenerational approach as follows:

From day one, our goal is to meet the basic needs of the family as they work towards stable housing... Our social workers work closely with school advocates to ensure the children are not missing schoolwork, transportation is provided in a timely manner and there are minimal disruptions to their school work. Additionally, our social workers also assess the needs of the children and provide referrals and / or counseling to the children in house to address any trauma or mental illness they may suffer from.

Both parents / guardians and children are receiving services simultaneously in the program through our case management team. Adults are linked with a case manager for financial coaching while also receiving other services such as mental health, parenting classes, ESL class or computer classes. Children are linked with a mentor to provide school guidance and support while also receiving other services such as mental health, tutoring, and college prep.

Overall, this may indicate an opportunity for Siemer Institute and other funders to **educate and advise service providers on this topic**, as it seems that many providers may consider any provision of services or activities to children (e.g., after-school camp or summer camp, family dining events, or referrals to external case management workers) as a 2-Gen approach, when the reality is more complicated. It's also possible there is confusion in the definition of 2-Gen programming. Finally, encouraging providers to provide more detailed descriptions of their approach to designing and delivering 2-Gen programming would be helpful.

Insights From Housing Stability Experts

Conversations with program representatives regarding 2-Gen programming echoed the quantitative results. That is, although many programs reported having a 2-Gen component, some programs had a stronger grasp on this concept than others. Interestingly, programs with the strongest 2-Gen orientation (from the researchers' perspective) tended to be embedded in larger homelessness prevention efforts. For example, one of the programs with a strong 2-Gen component was part of a homelessness prevention campus that included shelter care when necessary, and approaches 2-Gen from a holistic perspective.

"Where we focus is on tightly coordinating [programming]. For instance, we have weekly meetings where case managers, employment coaches that work with adults also meet with kids' preschool teachers, team leaders in school, housing… etc… everyone serving the family is in contact… we try to really get the family invested in this idea – how the whole is more than the sum of its parts. We want to ignite a sense of shared purpose for the family. We want them to support each other… we see that as the engine that drives long lasting success as a family and helps them move to self-sufficiency."

Part 2: Key Outputs And Outcomes Across The Siemer Institute Network

SIEMER INSTITUTE NETWORK OUTPUTS

In 2016, 86 community-based service providers received funding from Siemer Institute.[4] Located in 53 communities within 51 United Ways across the United States, these programs served more than 8,400 families and more than 15,000 school-aged children. From 2015 to 2016, there was a slight increase in the number of total families served and a moderately-sized increase in the number of total school-age children in families served across the Siemer Institute network.

Table 7: Network Outputs - Families And School-Aged Children Served (2014-2016)

	Total families served	% change	Average families served per provider	% change
2014	5,783	-	77	-
2015	8,240	42%	97	26%
2016	8,403	2%	98	1%
	Total school-aged (SA) children	**% change**	**Average SA children per provider**	**% change**
2014	9,390	-	125	-
2015	13,037	39%	153	23%
2016	15,019	15%	175	14%

Other (similar) Siemer Institute network family outputs are briefly described below.

- From 2015 to 2016, the number of new families served decreased by 2 percentage points across the Siemer Institute network (from 5,318 to 5,204, respectively).
- From 2015 to 2016, the total number of children in families served, which includes both school-aged children and younger ones, increased by 13 percentage points across the Siemer Institute network (from 16,922 to 19,061, respectively).

In addition to designing programs to reflect their local community's needs, service providers also create their own criteria for determining when families complete or drop-out of their program. Figure 1 presents an overview of how Siemer Institute supported programs in 2016 measure completion. Most (43%) define completion as occurring when the family has stable housing and adequate income to maintain it; another 31% define completion as occurring when the family has achieved most or all of its goals.

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[4] In 2015, the number of service providers was also 86. In 2014, the number of service providers was 75.

Only 3% of the programs in 2016 measured completion based on the family's score on a standardized assessment.

Figure 1: How Programs Define Completion (2016)

n=80
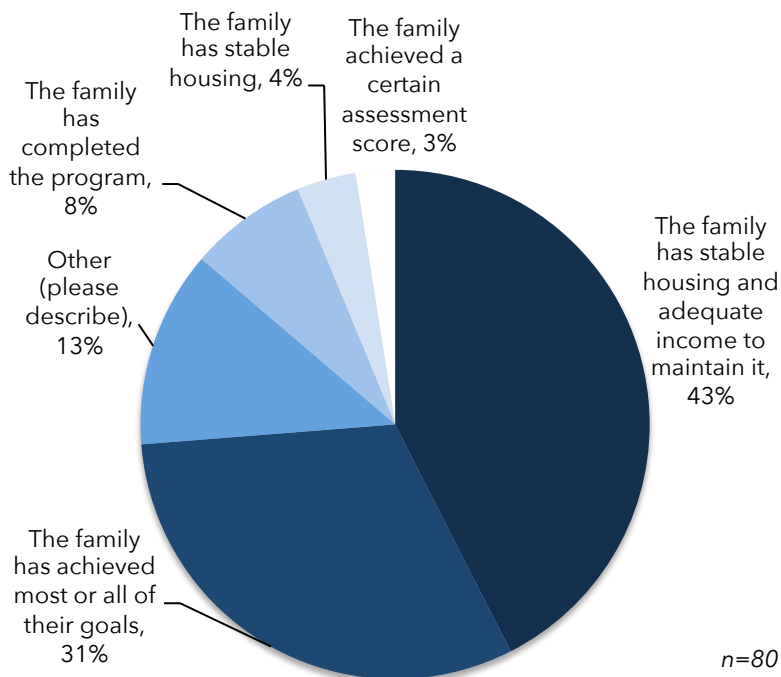
Looking across the Siemer Institute network from 2015 to 2016, there was a slight increase in the number of completions and a slight decrease in dropouts.

Insights From Housing Stability Experts

By design, individual programs can define success in different ways. This is important for program flexibility, but additional guidance from Siemer Institute could be helpful to programs and the families they serve. Some programs exit families very infrequently, which could interfere with comparing success rates between programs. As one interviewee put it: "We have fewer exits… they are welcome to work with us for as long as they want and we have such a breadth of services / classes… Basically, [we] just exit those who aren't active for one year and can't be reached, or declined services."

Table 8: Network Outputs - Completions And Dropouts (2014-2016)

	Total completions	% change	Completions per provider	% change
2014	2,275	-	30	-
2015	3,411	50%	40	32%
2016	3,511	3%	41	2%

	Total dropouts	% change	Dropouts per provider	% change
2014	627	-	8	-
2015	836	33%	10	18%
2016	795	-5%	9	-6%

As shown in Figure 2, the completion rate across the Siemer Institute network increased slightly to 42% from 2015 to 2016, while the dropout rate decreased over the same period from 11% to 9%.[5] This suggests that Siemer Institute supported programs may be having more success at identifying families that are "right-fits" to their programming.

Figure 2: Network Outputs - Completion And Dropout Rates (2014-2016)
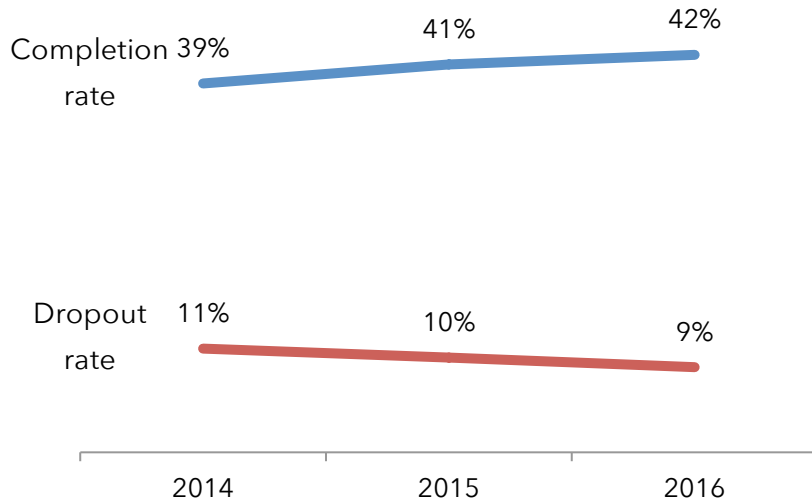
Further analysis revealed that programs with higher 2016 completion rates (e.g., total number of completions divided by the total number of families served) revealed no systematic differences in how programs defined completion. This suggests that the difference captures real differences in completion rates and is not an artifact of reporting.

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[5] The network-wide completion rate was calculated by dividing the sum of the total number of reported completes by the sum of the total number of families served. The network-wide dropout rate was calculated by dividing the sum of the total number of reported dropouts by the sum of the total number of families served.

SIEMER INSTITUTE NETWORK OUTCOMES

Siemer Institute's Shared Measurement Framework includes 14 outcomes distributed across three domains: 1) financial stability; 2) housing stability; and 3) educational stability, as shown below in Table 9. Four of the 14 outcomes in the framework are core ones that closely align with the mission and purpose of Siemer Institute. These four core outcomes are tracked and reported by each service provider; the other 10 outcomes in the Shared Measurement Framework are optional.
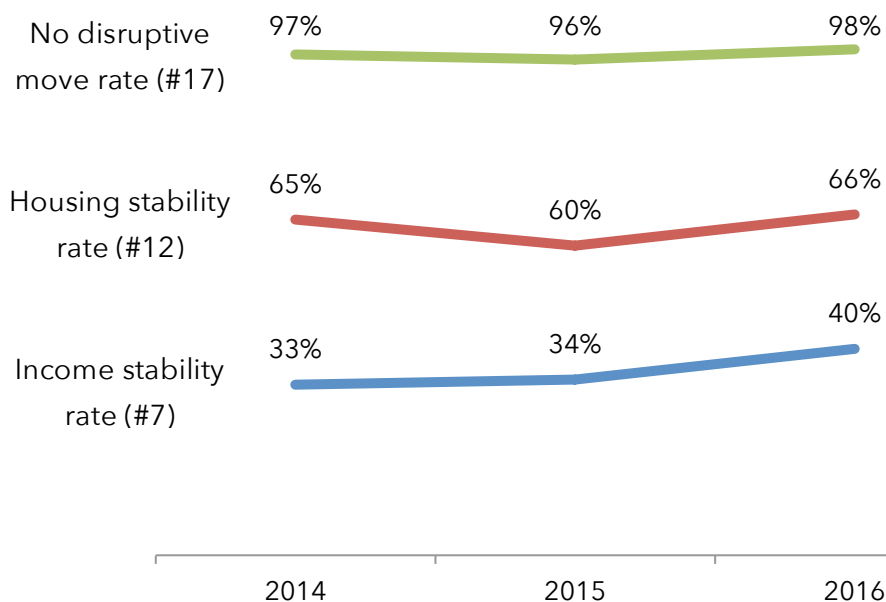
Table 9: Siemer Institute Network Outcomes Overview

Financial stability	Housing stability	Educational stability
Families who move to a higher level on the income dimension of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix after a reasonable amount of time. (#7, core)	**Families who set a goal to obtain and/or maintain appropriate, safe, stable housing and achieve outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#12, core)**	**Families with school-aged children who make a planned, supported transfer in school and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#16, core)**
Families who set financial goals and achieve their goals after a reasonable amount of time. (#8)	Families who set the goal to pay their mortgage or rent on time and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#13)	**Families with school-aged children that had a disruptive move to a school other than school of origin. (#17, core)**
Families who set the goal to develop and maintain a monthly budget who achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#9)	Adults who set the goal to obtain their GED or high school diploma and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#14)	Children who set the goal to reduce the frequency of disciplinary incidents and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#18)
Adults who set a goal to obtain employment and achieve this outcome after reasonable amount of time. (#10)	Adults who set the goal to enroll in college or a technical/vocational program and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#15)	Children who move to a higher level of enrollment and attendance on the children's education dimension of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix after a reasonable amount of time. (#19)
Adults who set a goal to increase income by a mutually agreed upon amount and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#11)		Children who set the goal to improve grades by a mutually agreed upon amount and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time. (#20)

A number of stories reveal themselves when one looks at the core outcome success rates[6] across the Siemer Institute network from 2014 through 2016 (see Figure 3). With regard to the core outcome of housing stability (#12), 66% of the families served across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were recorded as having a successful outcome, a rate that is on par with that observed in 2014. Overall, 5,528 families across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were recorded as having success on this core outcome.

Figure 3: Network Core Outcome Success Rates (2014-2016)

No disruptive
move rate (#17)   97%   96%   98%

Housing stability   65%   66%
rate (#12)   60%

Income stability   40%
rate (#7)   33%   34%

           2014   2015   2016

With regard to the core outcome of income stability (#7), 40% of the families served across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were recorded as having a successful outcome, a rate that is greater than that observed in 2014. This difference over time approaches statistical significance, as indicated by a comparison of confidence intervals for the average success rate for 2014 and for 2016. Overall, 3,313 families across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were recorded as having success on this core outcome. This suggests that as a whole, Siemer Institute funded programs are improving in their ability to help families have more stable incomes.

No disruptive/unplanned moves (#17). Disruptive moves occur when neither Siemer Institute supported service providers nor a child's school have sufficient advance notice of a child

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[6] For core outcome rates #7 and #12, the network-wide completion rate for each was calculated by dividing the sum of the total number of reported successes by the sum of the total number of families served for that outcome.

moving to a different school. With regard to the core outcome of preventing these types moves, **98%** of the families served across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were recorded as having a successful outcome (i.e., <u>no</u> disruptive/unplanned moves), a rate that is on par with that observed in 2014. Overall, 8,256 families across the Siemer Institute network in 2016 were successful on this core outcome.[7]

<u>Planned/supportive moves</u> (#16) represent another core outcome measure. These types of moves are coordinated with Siemer Institute supported service providers. In 2016, 610 families had at least one planned/supported move, which is less than the 693 who had these types of moves in 2015. It is important to note that planned moves could be either a negative or positive outcome for a family. In fact, when asked to describe their favorite success story, one qualitative interviewee recalled a woman who did move to find work outside of the city but was able to do during the summer which interfered less with her children's educational progress. Another discussed helping parents find affordable housing in a better school district, which could also lead to better educational outcomes.

An interesting theme emerges when one combines both disruptive/unplanned moves and planned/supportive moves into one "school mobility" measure. In 2014, 28% of all the families who moved at least one of their school-age children did so in a disruptive manner. By 2016, this percentage dropped to 19%, which suggests that more families supported by Siemer Institute programs are avoiding the negative consequences of a disruptive move.

In addition to these four core outcomes, some Siemer Institute supported programs also track optional outcomes; success rates for these optional outcomes are shown in Table 10. Overall, the most frequently measured optional outcomes in 2016 relate to measures of financial stability, with programs tracking the extent to which families set and achieve financial goals (#8), develop and maintain a monthly budget (#9), and adults obtain employment (#10). Only a few programs in 2016 measured educational stability outcomes.

From 2015 to 2016, these optional outcome success rates increased greatly, which suggests that Siemer Institute support may have a wider effect on families' financial, housing, and educational stability, looking beyond the core outcomes discussed previously. For example,

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[7] For ease of reporting, service providers recorded instances of a family having a disruptive/unplanned move; there were 147 such events recorded by Siemer Institute supported programs in 2016. The network-wide success rate for core outcome #17 subtracts the summed number of families experiencing a disruptive move from the sum of the total number of families served and then divides this value by the sum of the total number of families served.

a higher percentage of families set and achieved their financial goals in 2016 (as compared to 2015), and a higher percentage of adults obtained employment and/or increased their income in 2016 (as compared to 2015). Readers should exercise some caution when interpreting these changes over time, however. It is possible that programs that had less success in 2014 or 2015 stopped tracking this outcome in 2016, and were replaced by programs that had more success on these outcomes. And although it is possible these increases reflect substantive changes in the quality of the programming and case management offered to program participants, it is also possible that these positive changes reflect providers being more careful when reporting on these outcome measures.

Table 10: Network Optional Outcome Success Rates (2014-2016)

	Success Rate			# of Service Providers Measuring This Outcome	
	2014	**2015**	**2016**	**2015**	**2016**
Families that set and achieve financial goals (#8)	59%	51%	65%	43	38
Families that develop and maintain a monthly budget (#9)	53%	53%	62%	43	40
Adults who obtain employment (#10)	44%	34%	59%	38	38
Adults who increase their income (#11)	42%	33%	45%	29	29
Families that pay mortgage or rent on time (#13)	56%	52%	71%	38	37
Adults obtain GED or HS diploma (#14)	9%	3%	15%	15	15
Adults enroll in college or vocational program (#15)	10%	6%	35%	23	26
Children who reduce the frequency of disciplinary incidents (#18)	32%	27%	73%	17	19
Children who move to a higher level of enrollment and attendance (#19)	40%	29%	80%	20	23
Children who improve grades (#20)	44%	32%	75%	18	25

Insights From Housing Stability Experts

Interviewees echoed the quantitative findings in this domain, citing reduced homelessness as their biggest success. They were more likely to mention educational stability outcomes than was evident in the quantitative data, probably because interviewees included those working from a school based model. They were also likely to cite the positive impacts of case management, including rapport with participants and the ability to really dig deep and leverage the financial investment with in-person support, counseling and assistance with planning. For one program, staff trained in trauma-informed care were particularly important for this component. The following quotes are instructive:

- *[School] mobility was reduced from 91% to 34% at this school in a very poor district where most people are trying to get out…. This leads to the academic piece, where it has gone from an F to a C school in two years.*
- *Maintaining housing or getting families into housing when they're low on resources.*
- *The level of case management- we really get in. We have a strong ability to move families from low to higher incomes. From entry to exit 90% of families increase their income by 50% or more.*
- *We looked at data/research for best practices with empowerment models. We looked at a lot of different models also: person-centered, trauma-informed and strength-based.*
- *[Re: Trauma informed care] Our Case Managers are trained on mental health and how that impacts community and family relationships – things that contribute to spending and employment patterns.*

FOLLOW-UP AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION

In addition to reporting key output and outcome data back to Siemer Institute, many programs follow-up with participants after they exit. In 2016, 45 of the 80 Siemer Institute supported programs (56%) followed up with program participants at some point after they exited the program. Among these 45 programs, 18 (40%) had an interval between program exit and follow-up that was at least a year. In the qualitative interviews, several program staff mentioned either the value of continued follow-up or requested insights from other programs on how to do this better or more comprehensively.

Part 3: Predicting Key Outcome Success

This section of the report shifts from a focus on <u>what</u> happened with the Siemer Institute supported programs in 2016 to an exploration of <u>why</u> some programs may have experienced more success with some of these core outcomes than other programs.

To do this, the researchers conducted a set of outcome driver analyses that were designed to help Siemer Institute understand which programmatic activities or features were most strongly associated with the four core outcomes. The four core outcome measures were regressed onto a set of explanatory variables that clearly relate to whether or not providers offer housing stability or financial stability services in-house (vs. offering it via referral or not at all), along with a few variables that help to describe aspects of the programs and the people they serve.

<u>Outcome 7 (Increase Income)</u>. Siemer Institute supported programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits or transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report their participants <u>increase their incomes</u>. However, programs that have longer average enrollment periods are less likely to report their participants increase their incomes. A follow-up analysis suggests that programs with an average enrollment length of less than 40 weeks are more likely to have success with this outcome as compared to longer programs. The qualitative interviews suggest this is in some part due to picking families for the program who need less long-term assistance due to limited funds. It is the nature of the program – both in terms of limited financial assistance and also in terms of finding families who are motivated to be partners in the effort.

> *We need people who are motivated and will do what they can. We help them feel supported and give them a boost.*

> *The cash assistance is critical and we're not seeing them come back when we select the right family. We are cherry picking for this program and I don't love that, but it's the best strategy given the limited funds available.*

> *Our program is helpful for giving short-term help so that a family doesn't lose housing.*

<u>Outcome 12 (Housing Stability)</u>. Siemer Institute supported programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits or transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report their participants <u>stabilize their housing situation</u>. However, programs that serve more families or that have a

greater percentage of participants who are homeless at enrollment are less likely to report stable housing outcomes. A follow-up analysis suggests that programs that serve more than 350 families annually may be less likely to experience success with this outcome as compared to programs that serve fewer families. This could reflect the need stressed by some programs to provide very intense case management services – it's possible that as programs expand, caseloads grow and individual attention declines.

Outcome 16 (Planned/Supported Moves). Siemer Institute supported programs that are 2-Gen programs, that provide assistance with housing referrals, or that serve more families are more likely to report their families had a planned move. Programs that have a higher percentage of participants who are employed at enrollment are less likely to report a planned move.

Outcome 17 (No Disruptive School Moves). No statistically significant drivers were observed for this outcome.

Readers who are interested in learning more about how these analyses were conducted, and the specific analytic results that were obtained, are encouraged to consult the Technical Appendix included at the end of this report.

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In the spirit of mutual assistance across the Siemer Network, the program representatives who participated in the in-depth interviews were asked to identify areas of strength in which they or their program might potentially serve as a resource to others. The word cloud shown on the next page summarizes the topic areas identified.

Qualitative research findings: Areas of expertise to share

At least two of the eleven programs interviewed mentioned the larger terms in the graphic above. These programs often reported **leveraging Siemer Institute resources** and support as a way to introduce participants to a wide range of services are available to help them. They also see long lasting impact from Siemer Institute funds when used to help people maintain housing stability. One program uses Siemer Institute funding to help families in danger of being wrongfully evicted:

> *"How the Siemer funds play in is we can immediately connect them with the housing clinic…, we get them to complete the Siemer intake form and then we help them get caught up with rent so there is no legal reason to evict. It's been very helpful for us to have this as an emergency fund. They are often being evicted for $500. We then leverage their participation into awareness of housing law…"*

This idea is closely related to another commonly mentioned strength – fostering **community partnerships and collaboration**. Some programs spend a lot of time working with community partners to be sure they aren't duplicating services and to be clear about who owns what part of the homeless prevention program:

> *"We use the Arizona Matrix and divvy up the entire matrix amongst the partner agencies that specialize in those areas. Communication is key… grant based so we have to make sure we're not competing for the same funding. It's important to be very clear from the beginning – we have an MOU with all partners so things are spelled out from the very beginning."*

At least two programs interviewed were **school based** – operating in a school and serving all families within that school. These interviewees had important insights to share with regard to building employment pipelines (one did so within its school district by offering language courses for participants that were geared toward available transportation and facilities openings at the district level) and working within the community to find resources to assist families (part of the community school framework).

Finally, some programs seemed to fully embrace the intent and impact of **2-Gen programming**, and have already been recognized in this domain by making presentations about it. These programs are well positioned to assist others as they attempt to implement comprehensive, family-focused programming.

These programs also feel well positioned to handle **financial literacy**, though at least one interviewee expressed a need for education in this area that connects more easily to their client base:

> *"Right now we use [redacted] who basically markets living within your means. We don't love the worksheets or completely agree with everything he says, but the videos work well. The clients laugh and have a good time. We cringe at some of the things when watching it with the urban core. If we could find someone with an urban core background who is funny and covers the same stuff, we would definitely use it."*

Similarly, program representatives identified areas where they felt they could use assistance. As shown in the word cloud on the next page, respondents most often requested assistance with data management and collection, tracking people over time, accessing additional funding streams and best practices in case management.

Qualitative research findings: Areas where assistance would help

School based programming
Self care   Health care
Tracking people over time
Data management
Professional development
Financial literacy   Collaboration
Additional funding streams
Employment assistance
Unaffordable housing
Case management

In addition to the areas identified above, several respondents mentioned challenges related to the **changing political climate and its impact on undocumented immigrants** and beefing up **2-Gen programming efforts** in other places in the interview.

Finally, a qualitative question in the 2016 Siemer Institute Provider Profile asked providers to identify the major challenges they expected their program to face in the next year. Responses to this question (in 2016) identified a few other challenges, such as **a limited rental market** (in terms of identifying affordable housing in close proximity to jobs and other services). Additionally, these data pointed to a need to **increase funding** (also a theme in the qualitative interviews), along with **identifying resources to assist immigrants** to the United States in the wake of current or future law changes, particularly how to best work with **undocumented immigrant** families.

As mentioned previously, interviewed programs were selected intentionally to represent a mix of performance levels, contexts and program types. The qualitative research suggested ways in which higher performing and improving programs seemed to differ from other programs.

- The less successful or those who have declined in performance over time seemed to be more likely to be located in schools. Some respondents indicated they served all families in the school and they rarely or never exited respondents (unless they stopped showing up). Thus, it is unclear if this difference results from a lack of fit with the Siemer Institute model or a need to refine or realign measurement goals. More successful programs

tended to explicitly mention "wrong fit" indicators such as addiction, domestic violence, etc., suggesting that Siemer Institute funds may be less helpful when serving anyone who walks through the door.

- Less successful or declining programs also tended to mention they served non-native English speakers. They seemed to be less well integrated into the public assistance organizations in their area that serve the populations they work with – often more successful programs indicated they worked very closely with these agencies, even being able to get participants screened and signed up at their location.

- The more successful or improving programs tended to have a better grasp on what is meant by a 2-Gen orientation to case management and programming – they described it as a thorough integration of the programming for both adults and children as compared to simply claiming to serve or assist all members of the family.

- More successful programs tended to mention case managers as a strength and to discuss ways they invest in staff training and retention.

Part 4: Summary Of Key Findings And Recommendations

Siemer Institute supported programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits, transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report their participants **increase their incomes**. As noted earlier, Siemer Institute funded programs helped more families experience success with this core outcome in 2016, as compared to what was reported in 2014.

Programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits, transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report **housing stability** success. And Siemer Institute supported programs that are 2-Gen programs, that provide assistance with housing referrals, or that serve more families are more likely to report the children in their families had **educational stability**.

There is some insight to be gained from the qualitative research in terms of improvement moving forward. For instance, some respondents said they were interested in understanding how other **programs track outcomes and other data as well as engaging and tracking respondents' post-participation.** This is important for reporting to Siemer Institute, United Way and other funders, and for continuous improvement reasons. Assisting the Siemer Institute network with **developing and maintaining easy to use systems for tracking outcomes** would be a valuable service to network programs. One step toward doing this might be to streamline Siemer Institute's reporting requirements, if possible, or to very clearly define the tracked outcomes in a way that makes generating counts relatively easy.

Respondents expressed gratitude for the funds and support provided by Siemer Institute, including the Summit. They also expressed a desire for **direct connections to other programs, especially those that are similar to their programs** (in terms of demographics served, non-native English speakers, school based program vs. other organizations, etc.). Siemer Institute could consider building a website or directory that would match programs on various characteristics to allow them to reach out to one another for program advice. Helping connect programs more directly in other ways than the Summit may leverage the expertise that already exists within the Siemer Institute Network.

Additionally, the qualitative interviews revealed that **nearly every program was able to identify one or more areas where they felt comfortable being a local expert.** It would behoove Siemer Institute to capitalize on this expertise. Options for doing so could include requesting one pagers from each program that are stored in an easily accessible online archive or simply asking all programs where they could serve as a resource to others and including this information with a directory that allows programs to seek out advice.

One interviewee did express some confusion about what Siemer Institute wanted to track, at least initially: *"There is some ambiguity in what we are asked to report to Siemer and we are still working through the best way to provide it. They [SIEMER STAFF] do continually clarify what they're trying to ask. We're in a good place now."* This suggests there may be a need to **further clarify evaluation metrics and definitions**.

With these findings in mind, the evaluators suggest the following program evaluation changes for Siemer Institute's consideration.

Measure core outcomes more consistently across programs

Siemer Institute's core outcome measures are not measured consistently across programs, which makes it difficult for the evaluation to assess whether the funded programs are consistently achieving the outcomes they set out to deliver.

Provide standard definitions for key evaluation concepts. It is our understanding that Siemer has moved toward providing clearer definitions to funded organizations over time, but there is room for improvement here. Specific suggestions include:
- Provide a standard definition of homelessness so all programs are reporting the same indicator variable.
- Help programs understand what 2-Gen programming is, especially if this is going to be a priority in the future. Different programs seem to have different working definitions of what 2-Gen is, ranging from simply serving both children and adults in some capacity to full integration of adult and child programming to help foster family success. One potential strategy would be to provide a checklist of elements that help define the continuum of 2-Gen programming – this would rely less on each individual's programmatic understanding of the concept and more on objective measures of it. The pending issue brief may help with this.

Measure core outcomes at program exit. Currently, there is no standard protocol that prescribes when programs should log/report the achievement of Siemer Institute's core outcomes. For example, one program may log/report success on core outcome #12 (housing stability) whenever it is observed during a family's enrollment, even if it happens two weeks into a 36-week program. Another program may log/report success on the same core outcome only if it is determined when the family exits from the program.

Relatedly, there may be measurement error associated with programs' current outcome reporting. For example, imagine a family engaging with a program in September 2015 and

achieving housing stability that December. Although this family continues to receive services through March 2016, its housing stability may not continue to increase from December 2015 to March 2016. It is unclear whether or when programs would record this family's experience of increasing housing stability.

Ultimately, this lack of standardized reporting means it is possible that some programs erroneously report their progress in helping families achieve housing stability, financial stability, or educational stability. Core outcomes, and the indicators required for measuring these, should be recorded when families exit from the program, with the relevant pre-measures occurring at program entry. Furthermore, a clear and commonly accepted definition of what constitutes a program exit would also be helpful (e.g., some only "exit" families those who have stopped responding to case managers).

Consider suggesting a maximum program length. Before 2017, Siemer Institute supported programs measured whether their core outcomes occurred for each participating family "after a reasonable amount of time." Some programs were designed to work over a three-month period, while other programs were designed to work over an 18-month period. And a few programs only infrequently have their families formally exit, instead relying on attrition. Such a high degree of variability among programs can make it difficult for Siemer Institute's evaluation efforts to identify reliable changes over time.

Consider increasing the scope of indicators measured for SI's core outcomes

Considering Siemer Institute's primary programmatic focus is to increase families' housing and financial stability, with the expectation that this will have positive downstream effects on educational stability, Siemer Institute should consider requiring that funded programs also measure the following (in addition to what it is currently measuring for the core outcomes):

- For educational stability, whether or not each family has had a disruptive or planned/supportive move from the housing it was in during the 12 months prior to entering the SI funded program, measured at program entry.
- For housing stability, whether or not each family has moved to a higher level on the housing dimension of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix, measured at program entry and again at exit.
- Regarding housing stability, the percentage of family/household income spent on housing costs, measured at program entry and again at exit.
- Regarding transportation assistance, there may be value in collecting more specific information about the type and amount of support provided by programs.

Increase the strength of future program evaluations

The current evaluation, along with the others that preceded it, was only able to analyze data at the program level. Analyzing data at this aggregate level comes with some disadvantages. Most noticeably, it reduces Siemer Institute's ability to detect meaningful changes over time, or the potential drivers of these changes, because of reduced statistical power.

- The researchers encourage Siemer Institute's continued development of programs' voluntary use of an online data collection, including Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix responses at the family level, both at program entry and again at program exit.
- Siemer Institute should encourage program staff to continue exercising care when recording and submitting output, outcome, or program profile information (e.g., when describing how their program reflects a 2-Gen philosophy).
- Siemer Institute should also consider requiring funded programs share the family-level data they collect for the four core outcomes. Programs are already collecting this information, so the only additional programmatic burden will be sharing a de-individuated data file (so as to protect family confidentiality) with Siemer Institute.
- Siemer Institute should continue to look for ways to streamline data collection processes. Working with programs and United Way to identify common elements already collected for other purposes and providing technical assistance to programs on collecting data and tracking participants over time would be helpful.

Miscellaneous program evaluation improvement suggestions

- The Service Provider Profile sometimes uses different response options (i.e., answers) for highly similar questions (e.g., Q21, Q22, Q23, and Q24). To reduce the possibility of measurement error, similar questions should offer similar response options.
- Regarding educational stability, when calculating the rate of disruptive moves that occur, the correct denominator should be the number of families with a school-aged child. Unfortunately, this number is not tracked/reported to Siemer Institute, so instead we must use the total number of families. This introduces measurement error.
- Regularly screen data and have a procedure for following up on potential outliers in closer to real time. This will allow necessary corrections to occur before the formal evaluation begins.

Technical Appendix

This section presents details about the driver analyses described in Part 3 of this report.

Siemer Institute provided Illuminology with two data files that featured prominently in these analyses.

(1) Service provider performance data [2014,2015,2016 Perf Data.xlsx]. Each row of this data file contained one year of output data (e.g., families served, school-age children) and outcome data (e.g., income stability, housing stability) for each service provider. This was a stacked data file, which means a service provider could have up to three rows of data present in the file (e.g., data for 2014, 2015, and 2016).

(2) Service provider profile data [Service Provider Profiles 2016.xls]. Each row of this data file contained descriptive information about each SI funded program as reported by the service providers. For example, what kinds of services are offered to program participants? Are the program's services primarily offered in-house or via referrals? Is the program a 2-Gen program? Most program representatives provided their descriptive information in 2016, although some provided it in January 2017.

A "RespondentID" uniquely identified each service provider listed in the Service Provider Profile 2016 data file. Because we wanted to combine the profile data with the performance data, and because the unique "RespondentID" variable was absent from the performance data file, we copied and pasted RespondentID values into the performance data file.

Using the STATA software package, we then merged the performance data and profile data files together. We made the assumption, which Siemer Institute confirmed to be appropriate, that the 2016 program profile data could reasonably describe each program as it operated in 2015. Performance data from 2014 were dropped from this merged data file. To control for the fact that some service providers provided more than one data point (e.g., 2015 performance data and 2016 performance data), respondents were treated as clusters via STATA's complex survey [svy] command.

Some minor adjustments were made to the Service Provider Profile 2016 data file to enable quantitative analysis. For example, if a range was provided (e.g., 40-48 weeks) in response to Q7 ("What is the average length of enrollment (in weeks) for families in the program?"), this was replaced by the range's midpoint value. The 2-Gen program explanatory variable reflected the code assigned by the researchers after reading each service providers description of their multi-generational supports, as was discussed previously.

We then calculated outcome success percentages for each year of service provider data in this merged data file. For example, for core Outcome 7 (Increase Income: Families who move to a higher level on the income dimension of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix after a reasonable amount of time), we divided the number of families that were counted as having success on this outcome measure by the total number of families served. This process was repeated for core Outcome 12 (Stable Housing: Families who set goal to obtain and/or maintain appropriate, safe, stable housing and achieve outcome after a reasonable amount of time) and for core Outcome 17 (No disruptive moves).

Each core outcome measure was regressed onto the following explanatory variables:

- Housing counseling*
- Financial literacy*
- Public benefits (screening and referrals)*
- Transportation assistance*
- Utility assistance*
- Rent arrears or mortgage assistance*
- Housing application assistance*
- Housing referrals (to landlords/property managers)*
- Negotiation/mediation with landlords*
- Percentage of program participants who are homeless at enrollment
- Percentage of program participants who are employed at enrollment
- The program's 2-Gen status, as coded by the researchers.
- Average number of weeks participants are enrolled in the program
- Number of families served by the program
- Number of families "carried over" from one calendar year to the next.

Above, the explanatory variables marked with an asterisk (*) reflect services that clearly relate, at least on their face, to housing stability or financial stability. Operating from the hypothesis that programs that directly offer such services may have more success on these core outcomes as compared to programs that refer these services to external partners, these variables were recoded for this analysis. Programs that reported offering each service "exclusively in-house," "mostly in-house," or "equal mix of in-house & referrals" were given a value of "1" and all other responses were given a value of "0."

The number of families "carried over" from one calendar year to the next was included in an attempt to control for possible measurement error in how programs record/report their outcomes. For example, a family engaged with a program in 2015 could be recorded as not having a success in Outcome 7 in that year, continue to receive services from that program in 2016, and then be recorded as having a success in that year. This control variable is not interpreted in these analyses.

Outcome 7 (Increase Income). First, the regression approach described above was used to analyze the success rate for Outcome 7 (i.e., Families who move to a higher level on the income dimension of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix after a reasonable amount of time.) The entire set of predictors explained a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, $F_{(15, 60)} = 3.28$, $p < .01$. The estimates of the unstandardized regression coefficients and associated statistics are shown in Table 11. Explanatory variables observed to be statistically significant ($p < .05$) or that approach statistical significance ($p < .15$) are shown in the table in boldfaced type.

Siemer Institute supported programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits or transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report their participants <u>increase their incomes</u>. However, programs that have longer average enrollment periods are less likely to report their participants increase their incomes.

Table 11: Coefficients Produced By Regression Analysis Of Outcome 7 (Increase Income)

Explanatory variable	Coef.	Standard Error	t	p-value	95% Conf. Interval	
Financial literacy	-.029	.051	-.560	.575	-.130	.073
Housing counseling	.017	.060	.280	.782	-.104	.137
Public benefits (screening and referrals)	.082	.043	1.900	.061	-.004	.168
Transportation assistance	.135	.053	2.520	.014	.028	.241
Utility assistance	-.081	.096	-.840	.405	-.273	.111
Rent arrears or mortgage assistance	-.025	.076	-.330	.740	-.176	.125
Housing application assistance	-.034	.074	-.460	.646	-.181	.113
Housing referrals	.105	.079	1.330	.187	-.052	.262
Negotiation/mediation with landlords	-.013	.068	-.200	.846	-.148	.122
% of participants homeless at enrollment	.000	.001	-.100	.921	-.001	.001
% of participants employed at enrollment	.002	.001	2.240	.028	.000	.003
The program is a 2-Gen one	.057	.059	.960	.341	-.061	.175
Average # of weeks enrolled in program	-.002	.001	-2.350	.021	-.003	.000
# of families served (annually)	.000	.000	-.440	.658	-.001	.000
# of families carried over from prior year	-.001	.001	-1.650	.103	-.002	.000
Constant	.348	.114	3.040	.003	.120	.575

Observations (clustered programs) = 145 | R^2 = .24

The negative relationship between the Outcome 7 success rate and the average number of weeks enrolled in the program was surprising. To better understand the relationship between these two variables, Figure 4 presents a scatterplot display of these variables as well as a "locally weighted smoothing line"; these data reference the 2016 period. This figure suggests that programs with an average enrollment length of less than 40 weeks are more likely to have success with this outcome as compared to longer programs.

Figure 4: Scatterplot Display Of Outcome 7 Success Rates And Average Weeks Enrolled (2016)
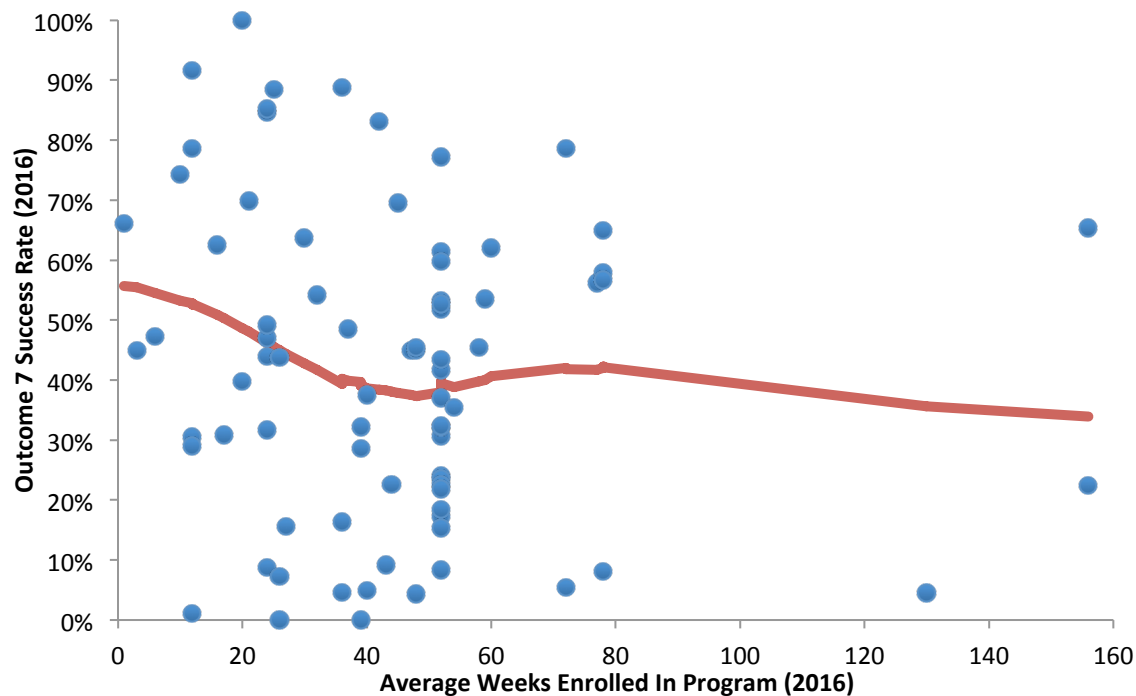
Outcome 12 (Housing Stability). The regression approach described previously was used to analyze the success rate for Outcome 12 (i.e., Families who set a goal to obtain and/or maintain appropriate, safe, stable housing and achieve outcome after a reasonable amount of time.) The entire set of predictors explained a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, $F (15, 60) = 2.94$, $p<.05$. The estimates of the unstandardized regression coefficients and associated statistics are shown in Table 12. Explanatory variables observed to be statistically significant ($p<.05$) or that approach statistical significance ($p<.15$) are shown in the table in boldfaced type.

Siemer Institute supported programs that provide assistance with accessing public benefits or transportation assistance, or that have a greater percentage of participants employed at enrollment are more likely to report their participants stabilize their housing situation.

However, programs that serve more families or that have a greater percentage of participants who are homeless at enrollment are less likely to report stable housing outcomes.

Table 12: Coefficients Produced By Regression Analysis Of Outcome 12 (Stable Housing)

Explanatory variable	Coef.	Standard Error	t	p-value	95% Conf. Interval	
Financial literacy	-.057	.059	-.970	.334	-.174	.060
Housing counseling	.039	.068	.580	.564	-.095	.174
Public benefits (screening and referrals)	.089	.045	1.970	.052	-.001	.179
Transportation assistance	.102	.051	2.010	.048	.001	.203
Utility assistance	-.009	.121	-.080	.938	-.251	.232
Rent arrears or mortgage assistance	.024	.121	.200	.841	-.216	.265
Housing application assistance	-.009	.076	-.120	.904	-.161	.142
Housing referrals	.072	.060	1.200	.234	-.048	.192
Negotiation/mediation with landlords	.029	.067	.440	.663	-.103	.162
% of participants homeless at enrollment	-.001	.001	-1.730	.088	-.002	.000
% of participants employed at enrollment	.003	.001	3.010	.004	.001	.004
The program is a 2-Gen one	.020	.073	.270	.786	-.125	.165
Average # of weeks enrolled in program	.000	.001	-.260	.793	-.002	.001
# of families served (annually)	-.001	.000	-2.850	.006	-.001	.000
# of families carried over from prior year	.001	.001	1.580	.118	.000	.002
Constant	.383	.150	2.560	.012	.085	.681

Observations (clustered programs) = 145 | R^2 = .19

The negative relationship between the Outcome 12 success rate and the total number of families served was surprising. To better understand the relationship between these two variables, Figure 5 presents a scatterplot display of these variables as well as a "locally weighted smoothing line"; these data reference the 2016 period. This figure suggests that programs that serve more than 350 families annually may be less likely to experience success with this outcome as compared to programs that serve fewer families.

Figure 5: Scatterplot Display Of Outcome 12 Success Rates And Total Families Served (2016)
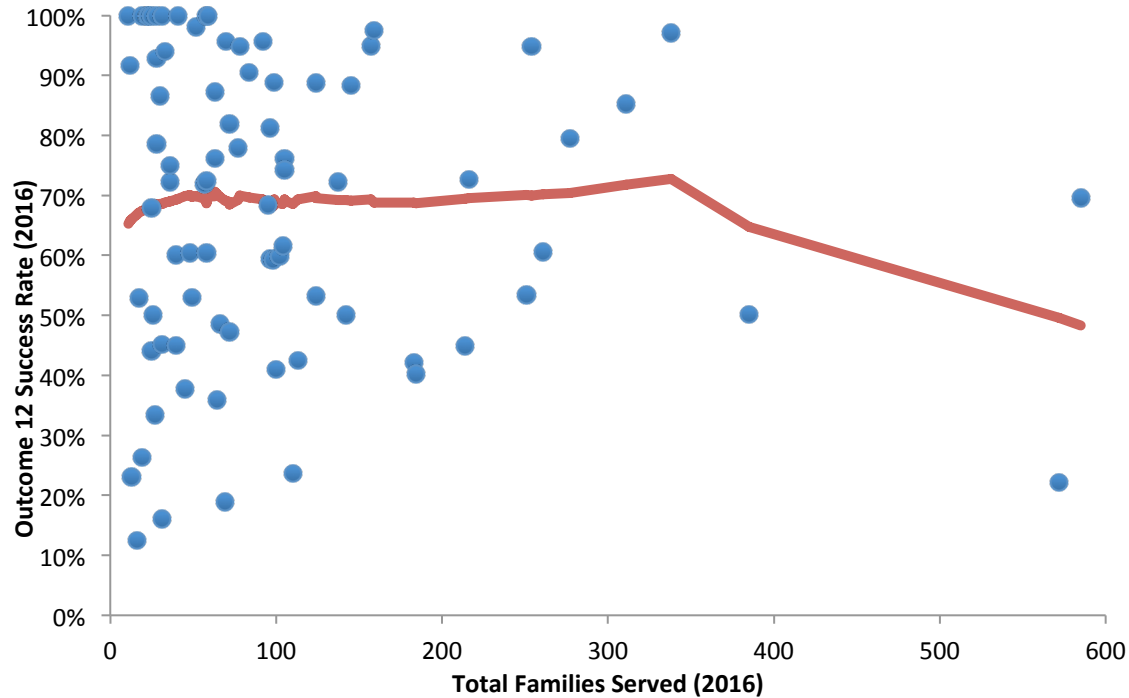
Outcome 16 (Planned/Supported Moves). Because there is no meaningful "ideal" success rate for core Outcome 16 (i.e., Families with school-aged children who make a planned, supported transfer in school and achieve this outcome after a reasonable amount of time), a negative binomial regression was used to analyze the count of successes for this core outcome.[1] This type of analysis is appropriate for identifying statistically significant predictors of count data, such as the number of planned/supported moves.

The entire set of predictors explained a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, $F (15, 60) = 2.92$, $p<.05$. The estimates of the negative binomial regression coefficients and associated statistics are shown in Table 13. Explanatory variables observed to be statistically significant ($p<.05$) or that approach statistical significance ($p<.15$) are shown in the table in boldfaced type.

Siemer Institute supported programs that are 2-Gen programs, that provide assistance with housing referrals, or that serve more families are more likely to report their families had a planned move. Programs that have a higher percentage of participants who are employed at enrollment are less likely to report a planned move.

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[1] Because disruptive moves are associated with negative consequences for school-aged children, the ideal rate for this core outcome is 0. SI does not have a specific expectation for the rate of families with school-aged children who change schools in a planned/supported manner; such moves have the potential to lead to positive outcomes.

Table 13: Coefficients Produced By Regression Analysis Of Outcome 16 (Planned Moves)

Explanatory variable	Coef.	Standard Error	t	p-value	95% Conf. Interval	
Financial literacy	-.319	.301	-1.060	.293	-.918	.280
Housing counseling	-.321	.279	-1.150	.254	-.877	.235
Public benefits (screening and referrals)	.031	.238	.130	.897	-.444	.506
Transportation assistance	.168	.306	.550	.586	-.442	.778
Utility assistance	.280	.589	.470	.636	-.894	1.454
Rent arrears or mortgage assistance	-.822	.681	-1.210	.231	-2.180	.535
Housing application assistance	-.019	.298	-.060	.949	-.614	.575
Housing referrals	.783	.338	2.320	.023	.110	1.456
Negotiation/mediation with landlords	.007	.402	.020	.986	-.793	.807
% of participants homeless at enrollment	.003	.003	.780	.440	-.004	.009
% of participants employed at enrollment	-.010	.004	-2.130	.037	-.019	-.001
The program is a 2-Gen one	1.189	.344	3.460	.001	.504	1.874
Average # of weeks enrolled in program	.006	.005	1.360	.177	-.003	.015
# of families served (annually)	.008	.002	3.420	.001	.003	.012
# of families carried over from prior year	.000	.005	.030	.976	-.009	.009
Constant	.157	.770	.200	.839	-1.377	1.692

Observations (clustered programs) = 145

Outcome 17 (No Disruptive School Moves). The regression approach described previously was used to analyze the success rate for the reciprocal of Outcome 17 (i.e., no disruptive school moves). The entire set of predictors did not explain a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, $F_{(15, 60)} = 1.29$, $p=.24$. No further analyses were conducted.

About Siemer Institute And This Report
[1] Pribesh, Shana and Douglas B. Downey. 1999. "Why Are Residential School Moves Associated with Poor School Performance?" *Demography*. 36(4): 521-534
[2] Orbadocic, Jelena, Jeffrey D. Long, J.J. Cutili, Chi Keung Chan, Elizabeth Hinz, David Heistad, and Ann S. Masten. 2009. "Academic Achievement of Homeless and Highly Mobile Children in an Urban School District: Longitudinal Evidence on Risk, Growth, and Resilience." *Development and Psychopathology*. 21: 493-518

Descriptive Overview Of The Siemer Institute Network
[1] Annie E. Casey Foundation. 11/12/2014. "Learn More: A Collection of Resources on Two-Generation Approaches," http://www.aecf.org/blog/learn-more-a-collection-of-resources-on-two-generation-approaches/. Site visited 6/19/2017.