

My Co-op at
rootCAUSE 



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CBMA SOCIAL INNOVATION ACCELERATOR CO-OP
JULY-DECEMBER 2015

My Role



- **CBMA Team: Social Innovation Accelerator** (Center for Black Male Achievement)
- **Research:**
 - Assisted with developing internal/external presentation materials including branding, memos, reports, etc.
 - Conducted research and data analysis for the Promise of Place report
- **Coordination/Logistics:**
 - Managed calendar events and scheduled meetings/calls
 - Performed general administrative tasks
- **Outreach:**
 - External outreach efforts via phone call and email



- ① Obtain field experience and gain necessary office skills
- ② Learn what goes on behind-the-scenes of a non-profit organization
- ③ Work for an organization that addresses social issues & has tangible results

Personal Goals:



why we exist

We believe resources allocated based on **PERFORMANCE** will **ACCELERATE PROGRESS** on social issues.

ROOT CAUSE
improves
the performance of...

...ORGANIZATIONS
WORKING ON
SOCIAL ISSUES

...ORGANIZATIONS THAT
ALLOCATE RESOURCES FOR
SOCIAL ISSUES

...RESULTING IN
quantifiable
improvement
IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

Job Details



- The \$6,000 stipend—
 - Although my friends were making a significant amount more than me, I thought it important that I take a co-op that would allow me to grow in the field of Social Enterprise.
 - This did not catch me off guard however, as pay tends to be lower in general when working for a non-profit organization.



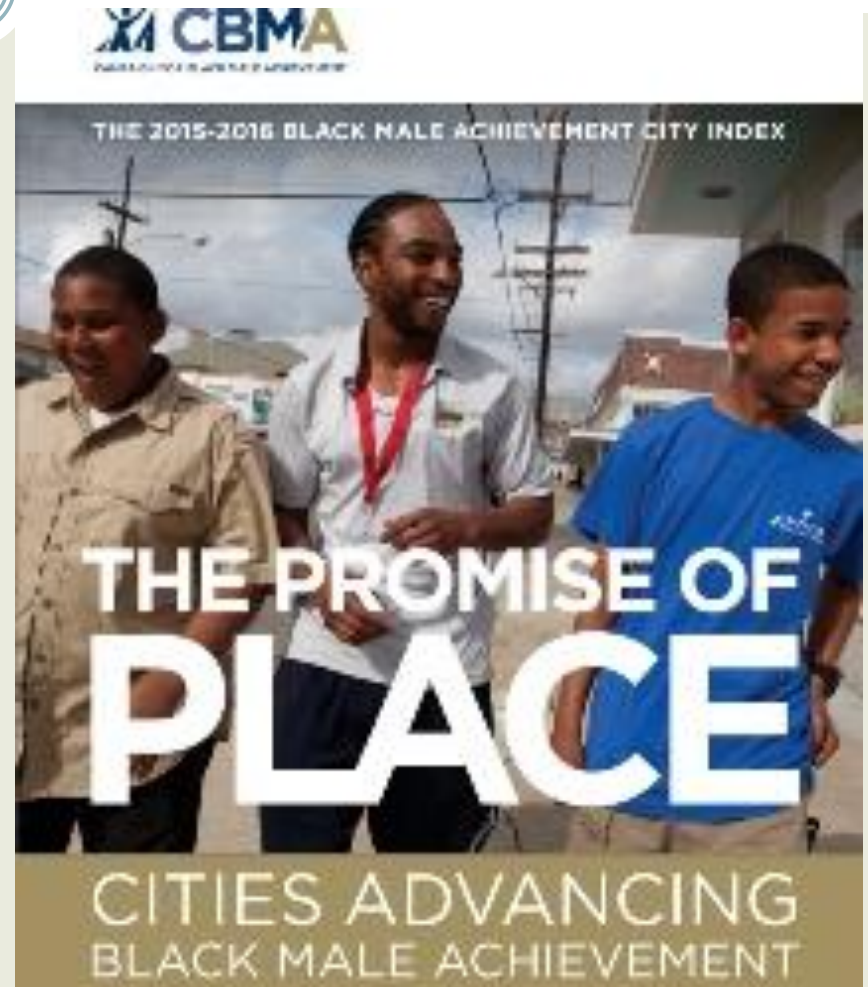
The CBMA Team



- I had two supervisors to report to for tasks during my time on the CBMA Team.
 - 1 Main supervisor
 - ✦ Led the CBMA Connect related tasks
 - 2 Team member – 2nd supervisor
 - ✦ I helped assist with research for the release of the Promise of Place report
 - ✦ Led Culture Committee at Root Cause to plan for organizational events
- I immediately felt like an integral member of the team.
 - ✦ The second half of my co-op I noticed a significant change in the amount of work I received, as well as a higher level of trust from my supervisors.
 - ✦ As time went on, I knew how to approach tasks and knew exactly what they were looking for in terms of branding, email format, special projects, etc.

Projects I worked on...

- The Promise of Place Report is a first-of-its-kind report that tracks and analyzes BMA work in cities across the U.S.
 - Took verbatim notes on calls with the CEO of the CBMA, Shawn Dove.
 - I assisted with research to measure and score a city's level of engagement and commitment towards helping Black men and boys.
 - I communicated with city mayors/officials to ensure accurate representation.
 - I was acknowledged in the report for my contributions!!



Projects I worked on (cont.)...



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Andrew is available for:

Phone

Andrew Wolk Boston, Massachusetts, US

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Keywords:

BMA Lens, Performance Measurement and Impact, and Governance, Team, Leadership, Strategy, Financial Sustainability



The Campaign for Black Male Achievement is a national membership network that seeks to

Andrew Wolk is the founder and CEO of Root Cause. He has consulted to dozens of organizations in all sectors, including Open Society Foundations, uAspire (formerly known as ACCESS), Center for Urban Families, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, and State Street Foundation.

MORE

Andrew designed and taught one of the first courses on social entrepreneurship in the country at Boston University in 1999. He currently holds appointments in social entrepreneurship and innovation at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and MIT [\(show more\)](#)



Connect with a BMA Peer:

Andrew Wolk
CEO,
Root Cause

- CBMA Connect is a technology platform that allows visionaries in the field of Black Male Achievement to connect and learn from one another across the country.
 - Took notes on calls with Pivot Planet for the start-up.
 - I single-handedly managed outreach (calls/emails) to leaders in the field to encourage signing up.
 - Built over 100 profiles using Photoshop and Pivot Planet platforms.
 - Tracked sign-up and profile progress using Microsoft Excel.



To become a BMA Innovator, there is an extensive application process consisting of a rigorous three-phase application.

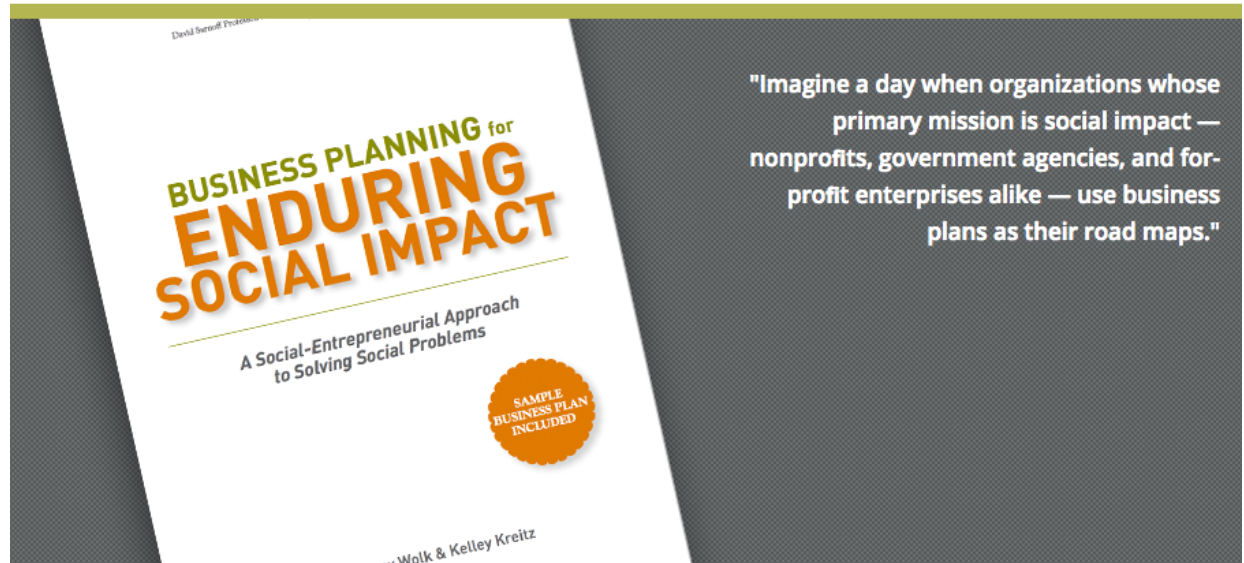
For those not selected this year, the CBMA Team offered one-on-one calls to go over areas of weaknesses and strengths.

I took verbatim notes on these calls and used those notes to search the Root Cause and CBMA Resource Libraries to send the Innovator that had applied.

Consulting Tasks:



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"Imagine a day when organizations whose primary mission is social impact — nonprofits, government agencies, and for-profit enterprises alike — use business plans as their road maps."

Previous Coursework:



- As I plan to be a social entrepreneur, I've built my framework of classes around this minor. I originally came to Northeastern University in the D'Amore McKim School in hopes of pursuing a business career. I soon found that I was simply not interested in the large corporate, competitive world of business. I decided I needed a more hands-on approach to working directly with people and decided to switch my major to Human Services and Sociology. I combined these majors with a minor in Social Entrepreneurship to work to advance the social justice agenda and encourage the spread of equality.

- ✦ Global Social Enterprise
- ✦ Globalization and International Affairs
- ✦ Introduction to Sociology
- ✦ Black Popular Culture
- ✦ Sociology of Violence
- ✦ Introduction to Social Policy



Challenges:



- **Office Culture:**
 - Root Cause tends to have an extremely quiet office setting, as employees usually work at their desks and convene in meeting rooms around the office when they need to discuss things.
 - Many employees work remotely, making the office nearly empty on specific days of the week.
- **Lunch Breaks:**
 - I noticed that many of my coworkers did not take a lunch break, but rather worked at their desks while they ate.
 - ✦ I found this was unhealthy for me, and asked around about what was acceptable. Many noted that they wished they could get out and take a lunch break, but get so caught up in their work. Some claimed it's certainly acceptable to take an hour in the middle of the day, but suggested finding a balance depending on the work load.

Challenges (cont.)



- **Work Load:**

- In the summer, I experienced periods of time where I had little to no tasks. My supervisor was working remotely, and the other team member was on vacation; so at times, I struggled to find things to do.
 - ✦ To solve the issue at hand, I asked other teams around the office for things to do. Oftentimes, someone on the Youth Violence Prevention team or Advisory Services team needed assistance with copy-editing, printing, etc.
 - ✦ In addition, I would sit in on webinars and meetings to learn more about what goes on outside of the CBMA Team.

New Skills & Self-Reflection:



- I became skilled in the use of various technology platforms!
 - Microsoft Excel
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Survey Gizmo
 - Ready Talk
 - Salesforce
 - CBMA Connect
 - Vertical Response
 - Google Cal
- Gained interpersonal skills
- Stronger attention to detail
- Ability to research and use data analysis skills
- In my role at Root Cause, I was forced to be very self-motivated and self-directed.
 - I knew I worked well in teams, but I think this co-op allowed me to improve my ability to work independently and take initiative on my own.
- Confidence is KEY.
 - Once I owned my work and was confident in what I had to do, I was much more successful. Insecurity often led to miscommunication.

Post Co-op Experience:



- After six months at Root Cause, I see the world through a different lens.
 - ✦ I truly believe sustainable solutions to the racial inequality of the world are out there, but it requires the public, private, and non-profit sectors working together.
 - ✦ Lifelong pipelines need to be created for the success of Black male youth, and that is exactly what we aimed to do by bringing the 2015-2016 BMA Innovators together in Detroit this past December.



Post Co-op Experience (cont.):



- I have learned that in the future, an office setting job is not for me.
 - ✦ As great as my experience at Root Cause was, I think that will be my last office job. I am a very active person, and sitting at my desk every day I realized I want to be one of the leaders out in the field promoting advancement, although both sides are equally important.



Reflection Time: INEQUALITY



- Working for the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, there was naturally a large emphasis on attempting to reverse the racial inequality that persists to this day.
 - With a specific focus on Black male youth, we tackled both racial and gender equality, seeking to assist organizations committed to improving life outcomes for Black men and boys.
- The CBMA network includes:
 - 4,703 leaders
 - Nearly 2,555 organizations/programs across the country



Thank You!