

# **Sojourner House**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Community Partner**

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### **Student Consulting Team**

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## **Background**

Sojourner House works to provide residential recovery services to mothers in the Pittsburgh area, including helping mothers recover from substance use disorders and rebuilding their relationships with their children who can remain with them during the recovery. The organization consists of two major programs named Sojourner House and Sojourner House MOMS (Motivation, Opportunities, Mentoring, and Spirituality). Sojourner House's mission is:

Offering compassionate, faith-based recovery services to women and their children.

## **Project Description**

### **Project Opportunity**

Sojourner House struggles with maintaining full capacity at its facilities, a crucial part of its mission to assist mothers in need. The current system of updating and communicating unit availability through manual methods like phone calls and emails is inefficient and error-prone, which often results in underutilized resources. This not only affects the mothers who could benefit from these services, but also hinders the organization's ability to secure additional grants and funding. Recognizing these inefficiencies, there is a significant opportunity to use technology to streamline communication processes between Sojourner House and its partners, ensuring more effective resource use and better support for its clients.

### **Project Vision**

The project vision is to significantly enhance the communication between Sojourner House and its external providers by establishing a dedicated provider portal on the Sojourner House website, facilitating real-time updates on bed availability through a simple, user-friendly Google Form used by Sojourner House staff. The updates will be directly reflected in a password-protected section of the portal accessible only to verified hospitals, shelters, and other partners.

## **Project Outcomes**

Overall, our project outcomes involve the website pages, documentation, user testing, and time saved by the employees/Sojourner House providers. Our project provides a technological solution for Sojourner House to share their status with other providers without having to physically contact each provider themselves. Providers themselves can reach out if they need to. Hence, the process between communication of Sojourner House and their providers is streamlined, Sojourner House now also has more time for their own work rather than having to spend time reaching out to providers, and effectively changing the process of work within Sojourner House. Sustainability is also achieved by providing and going through the solution documentation with their website manager.

## **Project Deliverables**

The final project deliverables include two WordPress pages: the “Provider Information” page and the “Sojourner House Openings Update Form” page, both of which are needed for updating and accessing real-time bed availability. Additionally, we have provided two detailed documentation files; one detailing the technical functionality including the logic and scripts connecting the Google Form to the WordPress display, and another detailing the design aspects of the web pages with high-fidelity wireframes and editable features. Supplementary materials are also included to substantiate the project progress.

## **Recommendations**

Overall, we recommended that Sojourner House continually assign two people to watch over the website as their daily tasks. This involves making sure providers know about it, updating it daily, and ensuring it is fixed if broken. We also recommend Sojourner House really does focus on having providers use the website as a first point of communication before they call to recommend someone. Lastly, we believe that a future IS student would have to thoroughly read through our documentation if they were to ever to work on a project that would build on our solution. A viable project to work on would be an email automation system that would notify the providers themselves every time Sojourner House has a change in availability or updates their census.

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## **Student Consulting Team**

**Andrew Chung** served as lead programmer. He is a third-year student majoring in Information Systems with a minor in Computer Science.

**Rachel Luo** served as project manager. She is a senior in Information Systems with a minor in Human Computer Interaction. She will be working as a software engineer.

**Emma Shi** served as quality assurance lead. She is a third-year student majoring in Information Systems with a concentration in Data Analytics.