

Greater Valley Community Services

Executive Summary

Community Partner

Anita Tillman

Student Consulting Team

Eric Lin, John Crawshaw, and Eric Du

Background

Greater Valley Community Services (GVCS) is a nonprofit organization based in Braddock, PA, dedicated to supporting children and families through various community programs. The organization was founded in 2009, and has upscaled their facilities to serve over 13,000 people in the greater Pittsburgh area since then. Their focus of programs can be characterized by their mission statement: *to strengthen, educate, and empower children and families through collaboration and resources, while promoting safety, growth, and a strong sense of community.*

Their services include a food pantry, fitness initiatives, mental health support, and youth educational programs. The James Project, their newest initiative, focuses on providing educational resources for autistic individuals, police officers, and caregivers.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

The opportunity for this project emerged through Greater Valley Community Services' recent launch of the James Project, an initiative aimed at improving communication and mutual understanding between neurodivergent individuals, especially with key groups such as police officers and caregivers. While GVCS has a clear vision for the course content within the program, they currently lack the technical expertise required to effectively implement it on their existing website.

The consulting team's familiarity with web technologies presents an opportunity to support GVCS in implementing this vision. By leveraging our technical skillset, we are well-positioned to design and develop an online course that not only aligns with GVCS's goals but also ensures accessibility, usability, and seamless integration with their existing digital infrastructure.

Project Vision

The vision for this project is to develop an online course platform integrated into Greater Valley Community Services' existing website. The course features structured content prepared by our community partner and is accessible only to registered users. Learners are segmented into groups—Police Officers, Caretakers, and Neurodiverse Individuals—each receiving tailored content and newsletters. The platform also tracks user progress and quiz performance, awarding certificates to those who meet completion thresholds. This system promotes engagement while advancing GVCS's mission of education and community empowerment.

Project Outcomes

Our primary outcome is a successful implementation of a user-tested course platform integrated with GVCS's existing site with secure logins, group-specific content, and certification upon course completion. Throughout the project, we focused on equipping our client, Anita, with the skills to independently manage and scale the course platform post-engagement. We dedicated several meetings to training her on editing course content, configuring automation features like emails and dashboards, and adjusting quiz thresholds to match evolving goals. Lastly, we created detailed documentation to streamline the organization's workflow for managing their Wix-based course platform. This guide shifted Anita's reliance on external help to having a centralized place for instructions on maintaining the website, ensuring sustainability for long-term use of our solution.

Project Deliverables

Our final deliverables consist of two main components. First, we are delivering a fully functional course page integrated into the client's existing Wix website. This page includes all finalized course content. Second, we are providing a comprehensive documentation file that outlines how to update and maintain the course platform. This includes step-by-step instructions for modifying course content, managing user settings, configuring automations, and troubleshooting common issues. Together, these deliverables ensure that the platform is both operational and sustainable for long-term use.

Recommendations

To ensure the long-term success and accessibility of the James Project course platform, we recommend focusing on continuous course monitoring and enhancing mobile compatibility. These strategies will help GVCS maintain a high-quality learning experience while laying the groundwork for future development.

- 1) Monitor user engagement and address issues proactively
- 2) Optimize the course for mobile use

Together, these recommendations will improve user experience, increase course completion rates, and support the sustainability and scalability of the platform.

Student Consulting Team

Eric Du was the Lead Developer. He is a current junior majoring in Information Systems and Computer Science. His passion is using technology to help make people's lives easier. In addition, he is also an advocate for new technology, a passionate learner, and a team player.

Eric Lin was the Project Manager. He is a current junior majoring in Information Systems and minoring in Computer Science. In the summer he will be interning at Amazon for software development.

John Crawshaw was the Client Relationship Manager. He is a current junior majoring in Information Systems and minoring in Computer Science and Computational Finance. This summer he will be interning at William Allan for software development and analytics.