

# NewEra412

## Executive Summary

### Community Partner

Taili Thompson

### Student Consulting Team

Rohan Butani

Annie Wu

Dora Xiao

## Background

Operation Better Block (OBB) is a violence prevention organization that uses a web application, NewEra412, to manage all street outreach work in the city of Pittsburgh. *Their joint mission is to reduce dissonance among social service efforts while increasing the human capital of social service organizations, government agencies, employers, and foundations.* NewEra412 accomplishes this by providing a central location for distributing resources and recording data for accountability. Our community partner, Taili Thompson, represents NewEra412 and has been managing its technological expansion over the past few years.

## Project Description

### Project Opportunity

NewEra412 received grant money to expand on two fronts this year. First, its geographical reach must expand from Pittsburgh to all of Allegheny County, and this requires the expansion of existing features to accommodate new neighborhoods. Second, NewEra412 will be used for school mentorship, so new features must be created to accommodate student data. Several minor bugs that inconvenience NewEra412 users should also be addressed.

### Project Vision

Since this expansion is significant and high-stakes, NewEra412 would benefit from professional, year-round software support, rather than the semester-long work of student teams. Furthermore, several pre-existing bugs, such as broken buttons and missing form options, should be fixed so that the expansion can build upon a safe foundation. We decided to connect NewEra412 with a professional software company and resolve minor bugs, before designing wireframes for the expanded features that the software company will implement over the summer.

## Project Outcomes

Our project outcomes fell into the following three categories: expansion, sustainability, and restoration. Under expansion we prototyped a view for student mentors and student mentor supervisors who will be using the NewEra412 database in the future, effectively materializing our client's vision for these features on paper. We were not able, however, to implement the features we prototyped. As a result, under sustainability we successfully found and

commissioned a software developer to develop these new features for our client in addition to an expanded data-map that covers all of Allegheny County and bug fixing NewEra412's email reference and forgot password functionalities. Finally, under restoration, we fixed smaller scale bugs, adding a link to our client's other website, Realistic ReEntry, adding downtown as an option in the meeting tracker form, fixing unresponsive pagination arrows, and removing exposed code from our client's site.

## **Project Deliverables**

One deliverable is the pre-existing codebase with manually-tested bugfixes on a separate "development" branch. The software company will deploy these bugfixes whenever they are ready. Another deliverable is the hi-fi wireframes of the new Allegheny County and School Mentorship features, which have been approved by the software company. These were iterated with the feedback of our community partner, the principal of a participating school, and members of OBB. Finally, we wrote missing documentation, such as setup instructions for Mac users and codebase audit information.

## **Recommendations**

One of our team's recommendations to our client was to set up a dev environment separate from the production environment for future development. Future development requires better staging when existing bugs are being investigated and when new features are under development. Another one of our team's recommendations is for our client to maintain an active checklist of existing bugs and new features that he wishes to be implemented.

## **Student Consulting Team**

**Rohan Butani** served as a project manager and managed client relationships. He is a fourth-year student majoring in Information Systems with minors in Human Computer Interaction and Creative Writing. He will be working at Goldman Sachs in the future and is looking forward to a career in finance.

**Annie Wu** served as the main designer and liaison with our software partner. She is a junior majoring in Information Systems with an additional major in Math and a minor in Computer Science. She will be interning at McKinsey this coming summer and is excited about a career in consulting.

**Dora Xiao** primarily completed software tasks. She is a junior majoring in Information Systems and minoring in Computer Science and Human Computer Interaction. She will be interning at Microsoft Nuance this summer and intends to pursue a career in data or software engineering.