**Learning Module – Vital Signs**

In this Project, you will be examining data from the Vital Signs report produced annually by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators (BNIA) alliance here at the University of Baltimore. You will then answer the six questions in the Assignment section.

**Step 1**

Go to BNIA webpage by [clicking here](http://bniajfi.org/). Look over the “Who We Are” statement, the projects section, and the “How to Use the Data” section, all on the main page.

**Step 2**

Still on the main page, there is an interactive map in the middle, and where you can select a Community Statistical Area (CSA). Select one of these CSAs, and it will zoom to that CSA. Once you do this, below the map, click on the “View more data about this community” button. This will bring you to a page with a list of categories of indicators such as Census Demographics and Sustainability. Click on a few of these categories and look through the data for that CSA. What does this data tell you about that community? Do this for two more CSAs.

**Step 3**

Go back to the main page. Click on the tab that says “Vital Signs by Topic Area”. This will open a menu with the same categories as in the previous step. Click on one these where you will be taken to a page with data about that topic area. Think about how is it organized differently than the categories Step 2. Now, looking at the list of indicators on the left side of that same page, click on any one of the indicator links, such as “Percent of Family Households Living Below the Poverty Line”. Look over that data, and then do the same for two other indicators in other topic areas.

**Assignment:**

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the CSA with the highest percentage of Children Living Below the Poverty line? What is the CSA with the lowest percentage? What is the average for Baltimore City?
2. What is the CSA with the highest percentage of Female Headed Households with children under 18? What is the CSA with the lowest percentage? What is the average for Baltimore City? Why might this indicator be important for planning?
3. What is the CSA with the highest percentage of Population 16-64 Employed? What is the CSA with the lowest percentage? What is the average for Baltimore City? Why might this indicator be important for planning?
4. Look at the indicator for Number of Banks and bank Branches per 1,000 Residents. What do you notice about a large amount of CSAs? How do you think this would affect personal financial matters such as savings, loans, etc. in these CSAs?
5. What is the percent of Employed Population with Travel Time to Work of 45 Minutes and Over (Sustainability) in the following CSAs: Southwest Baltimore, Greater Roland Park/Poplar Hill, and Inner Harbor/Federal Hill. What does this number signify? Could it be the source of any difficulties or problems?
6. Pick a CSA from the map on the main page. Tell me five interesting facts about it from the indicators. Do you see any main problems? Or are there good aspects that the indicators suggest?