



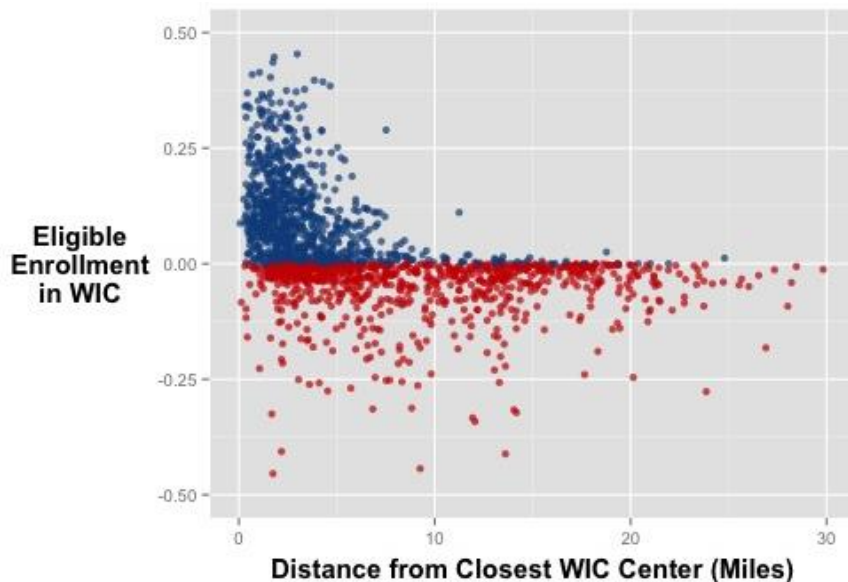
HOUSTON ACTION RESEARCH TEAM



Reilly Brooks, Evan Flack & Caroline Brigham

HDHHS Master Plan: WIC Usership and Facility Location, Spring 2016

This HART, brought together three undergraduate students from Economics, Statistics, Architecture, Sociology, and Policy Studies to assess community health needs across Houston. Working with Page Southerland Page (PSP) and the Houston Department of Health and Human Services (HDHHS) to further develop the HDHHS master plan, the team examined WIC enrollment and eligibility among Houstonians. The team was particularly interested in assessing whether location of a WIC center—measured as the distance (in miles) from an eligible user’s residential neighborhood to the nearest WIC location—impacted utilization of WIC services among actual and eligible WIC users. Results suggest that location of WIC centers do influence WIC utilization, such that enrolment in the WIC program is higher in neighborhoods closer to HDHHS WIC



facilities compared to neighborhoods further away. Factors other than location, such as program awareness, may also be important predictors of usership of WIC services. The work of this project and subsequent analysis by PSP using similar models will be foundational to HDHHS’s new master plan.