



OPTIMAL SOLUTIONS GROUP LLC

ENABLING DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

WELCOME

January 2007

QUICK LINKS



Happy New Year! In 2006, Optimal conducted major policy research projects for the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. And, Optimal added staff that

greatly expanded its expertise and capabilities in health and education. The company's strong past performance also enabled it to acquire new contracts and enter into option years on existing ones. In closing, I'd like to say thanks to our clients, partners, and staff for a great year.

Mark D. Turner, Ph.D., President and CEO

SPOTLIGHT

Optimal Evaluates Maryland Fatherhood and Marriage Programs

Optimal is working with the Maryland Department of Human Resources Community Services Administration, Baltimore Department of Social Services, the House of Ruth, and other faith-based and community partners to evaluate innovative marriage and fatherhood interventions that serve Baltimore City residents and ex-offenders in five jurisdictions throughout Maryland. Optimal has developed the management information system that will be used to facilitate intake, program participation, and data collection for the evaluation.

Medicare and Medicaid Services Being Examined by Optimal for Fraud and Abuse

Intensive field research is being performed by Optimal researchers on behalf of the Centers for Medicare &

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Medicaid Services' (CMS) Medicare/Medicaid Data Analysis Centers ([Medi-Medi](#)). Interviews are being conducted in 10 cities across the nation to provide CMS with program upgrade recommendations, which will include a timeline for expansion of the program to specific states, regions, and/or U.S. territories.

Measuring the Cost of Summer Learning Programs

In a national study to gather data about the cost of summer learning programs, the Center for Summer Learning has contracted with Optimal to design and pilot a cost monitoring tool that will eventually be used to accurately measure the cost of summer learning programs.

Optimal Overhauls the National Economic Association Web site

Optimal recently designed and launched a revamped Web site for the National Economic Association (NEA). The Web site, www.neaecon.org, provides amenities that allow members to maneuver through the site via a more user-friendly interface. Web site visitors can also register and pay dues online, access information on meetings, research, and view and apply for nationwide job vacancies.

OPTIMAL NEWS

New Staff Strengthen Optimal's Expertise in Health and Education Policy Research

The Education and Health Policy Research Centers at Optimal recently added three new researchers to its staff.

[Michelle Blair](#) joined the Education Research Center in September 2006.

[Jessica Beverwyk](#) and [Allison Buckley](#) joined the Health Policy Research Center in October and December 2006, respectively.

Grace Hong Earns Ph.D.

[Grace Hong](#), who started as an intern at Optimal in 2004 and transitioned into full-time employment in 2005, recently earned a Ph.D. in public policy from the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

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