

Introduction

- The HOME Project, initially founded in 2009 by medical students and faculty advisor, strives to create **“a permanent impact on improving access, education, and quality of health care while advocating for the social and medical needs of this population.”**
- The project currently has health promotions partnerships with three local shelters
 - **The Guesthouse of Milwaukee (a men’s shelter)**
 - **Milwaukee Women’s Center**
 - **Walker’s Point (shelter for kids/teens)**
- A need for information exchange and access to centralized resources was recognized to:
 - Provide up-to-date resources for HOME volunteers and community partners
 - Assist in the sustainability of the project by ensuring educational materials were accessible for successive student cohorts
- Establishing a website for the group was suggested as an option to meet these needs as the rise in the use of the internet as a tool of volunteerism grows.
 - 2011 US census found that 71.7% of households reported accessing the internet. (File, 2013)
 - An AARP survey found that internet users “were more likely than respondents overall to report volunteering in the last year.” (Conroy, Williams, 2014)
 - Among internet users that were active in volunteer groups:
 - 46% said that the internet helped them raise awareness about an issue
 - 38% said it helped solve or change an issue in society at large
 - 26% stated that it assisted in solving or changing a local problem. (Rainie, 2011)

Purpose

- **To advertise the HOME Project to the general public in order to spread awareness of its goals and efforts.**
- **To create a repository for educational information that student volunteers would be able to use in order to:**
 - Access presentations on health topics
 - Direct people to local resources for free or reduced health care or other benefits
 - Keep up to date on the latest HOME events and projects

References

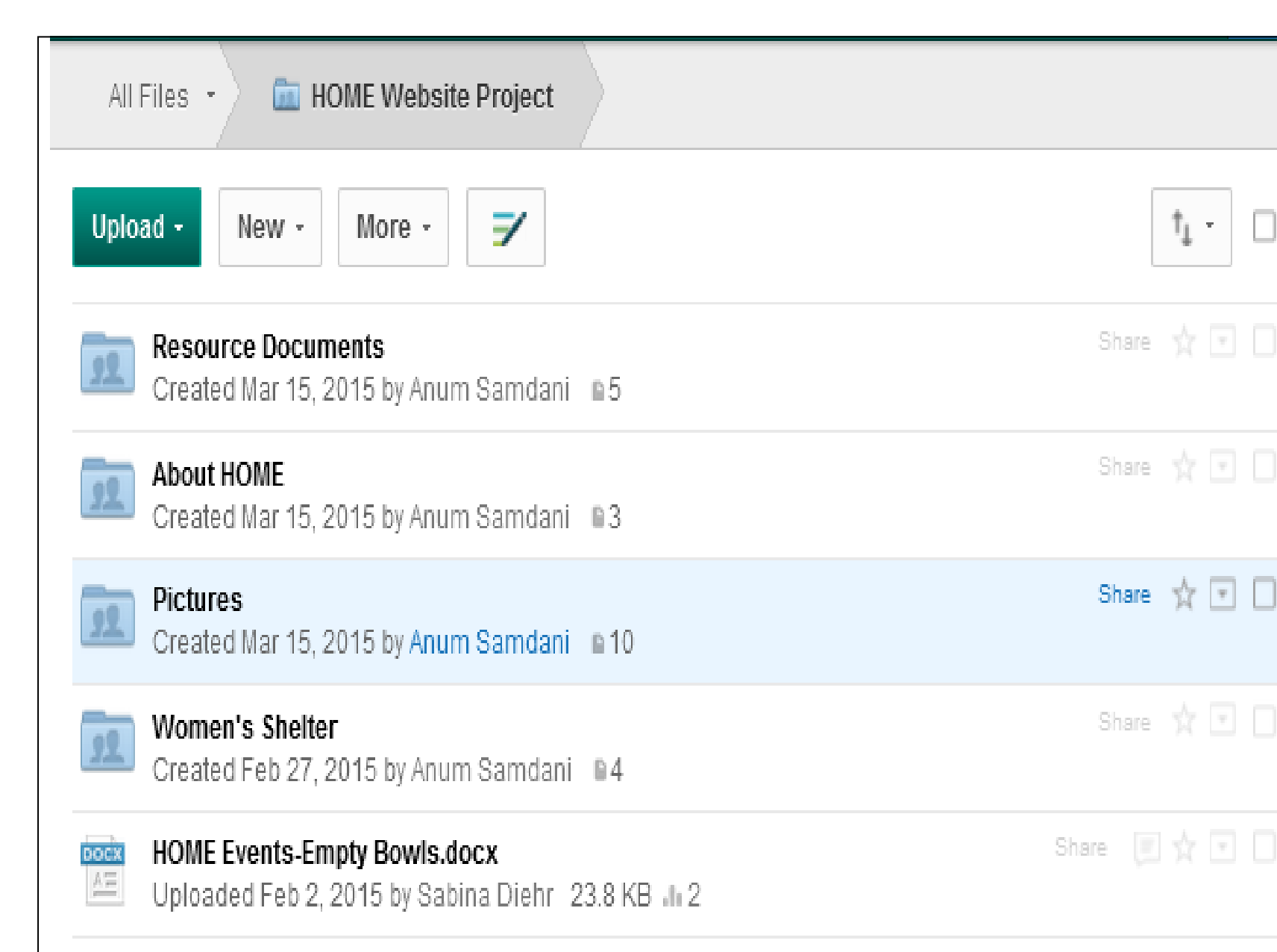
Conroy, S., & Williams, A. (2014). USE OF INTERNET, SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES, AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FOR VOLUNTEERISM. File, T. (2013). Computer and internet use in the United States. *Current Population Survey Reports, P20-568. US Census Bureau, Washington, DC.* Rainie, L., Purcell, K., & Smith, A. (2011). The social side of the internet. *Pew Internet & American Life Project.*

Methods

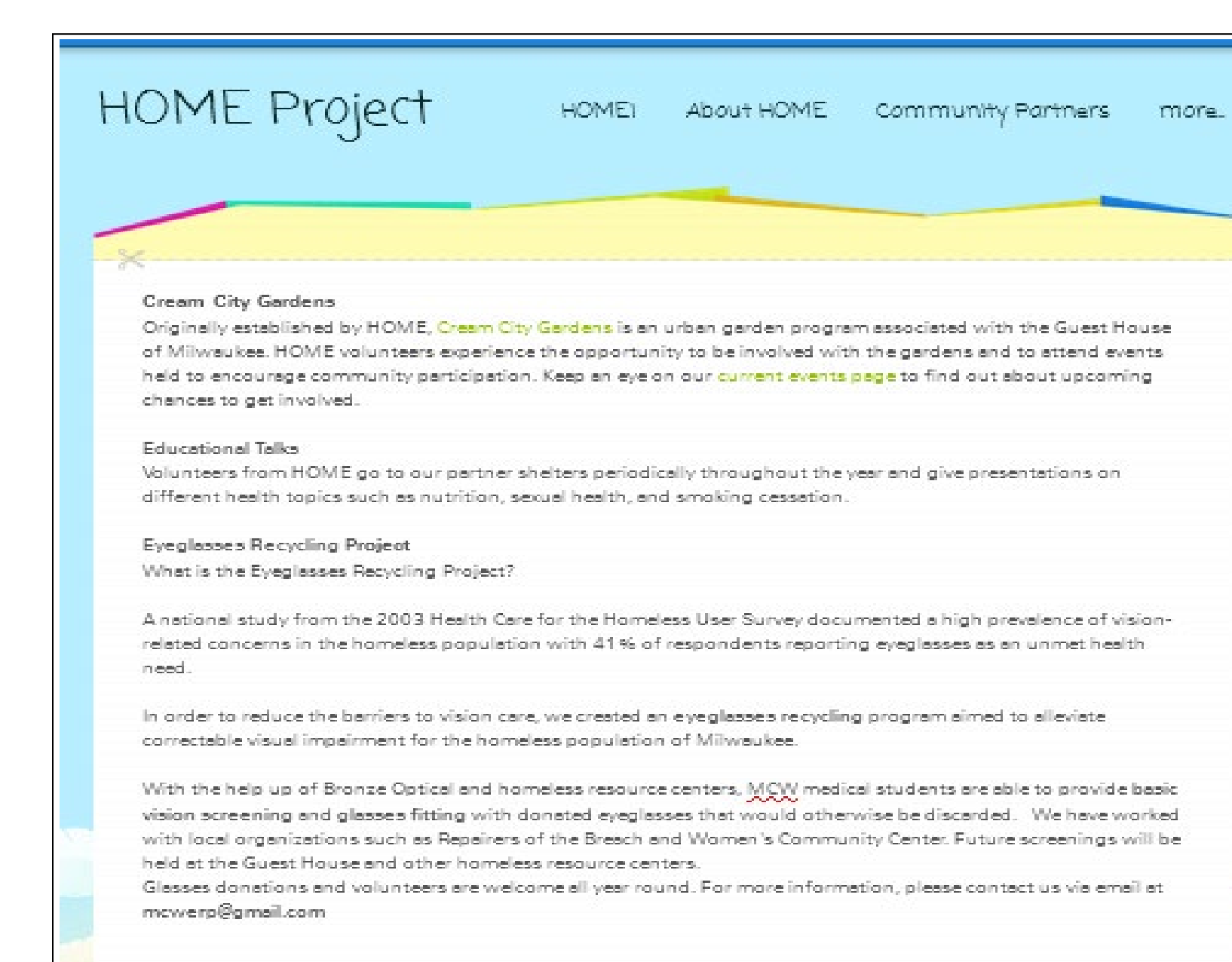
- Online repository for HOME files was created via an online storage service, “Box” which can be shared among HOME Project students and faculty.
- The website was created via a free hosting service, Weebly, selected for its ease of use and the ability to provide data on site traffic for free.
- The following pages were added to the site:
 - A summary page detailing the project’s mission
 - Links to community resources
 - Links to educational resources for use by volunteers
 - Information about HOME community partners



homeprojectmilwaukee.weebly.com



HOME's online repository on BOX

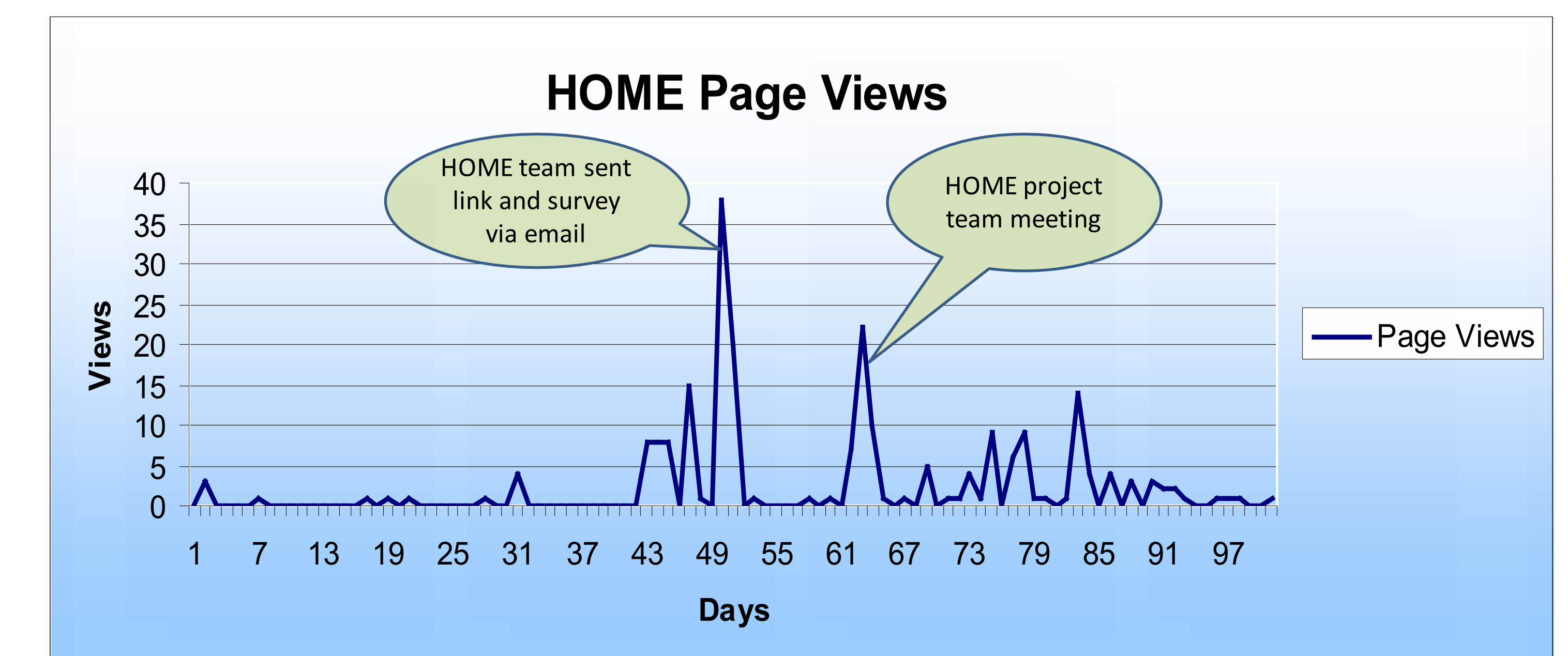


Examples of HOME projects

- A survey was sent to HOME members to elicit feedback and determine additional useful site features. Question asked included:
 - Any sections of the website that don't function correctly?
 - What did you like about the site?
 - What needs improvement?
 - What could be added in order to benefit your work with HOME?
- Weebly data on number of page views of the website was captured and recorded for three months

Results

- Survey results generally indicated positive responses to the website along with no issues with layout or accessing links or information
- Suggestions for the webpage were used to improve the site, including:
 - Information on local free/reduced health care
 - A method of displaying information about upcoming HOME meetings
 - Instruction on accessing files on BOX,
 - Information on the Eyeglasses Recycling Project being run by MCW students
 - A page to discuss HOME activities and accomplishments
- Pages were viewed infrequently, with spikes corresponding to HOME team events and active promotion



Graph of HOME website page views from January to April 2015

Conclusions/ Next Steps

- The Weebly HOME Project website is easy to build and navigate, and received positive reviews by users.
- Fluctuations in page views and time periods where the website was not accessed indicate that site is not yet fully utilized by HOME members
- The two largest spikes in page views happened after events that reminded members about the site's existence
 - This seems to indicate at least some interest in using the site
 - Members need to be reminded that it is available as a resource
- A HOME officer position has been established to manage social media and maintenance of the website to preserve longevity of the project
 - Future officers will encourage newly elected HOME leaders to submit materials and promote the website's different possible functions
 - A continual reassessment of the website and its utilization by members should be a routine part of the HOME Project
- Future assessments of member use of the website should be utilized in a way in order to encourage more responses
 - Update email lists to ensure current members are contacted
 - Collect feedback face-to-face during HOME project meetings
 - Obtain broader stakeholder input from community partners and others who work with homeless populations to expand the website's audience and usefulness